SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE

2015 Preview

THE SCOOP ON **116** THINGS THAT WILL ROCK YOUR YEAR

Entertainment WEEKLY

DEC. 26, 2014/JAN. 2, 2015 • #1343/1344

Hmpf
Game of Thrones
James Bond in SPECTRE
Jurassic World
Mad Max: Fury Road

EXCLUSIVE

Star Wars Secrets!

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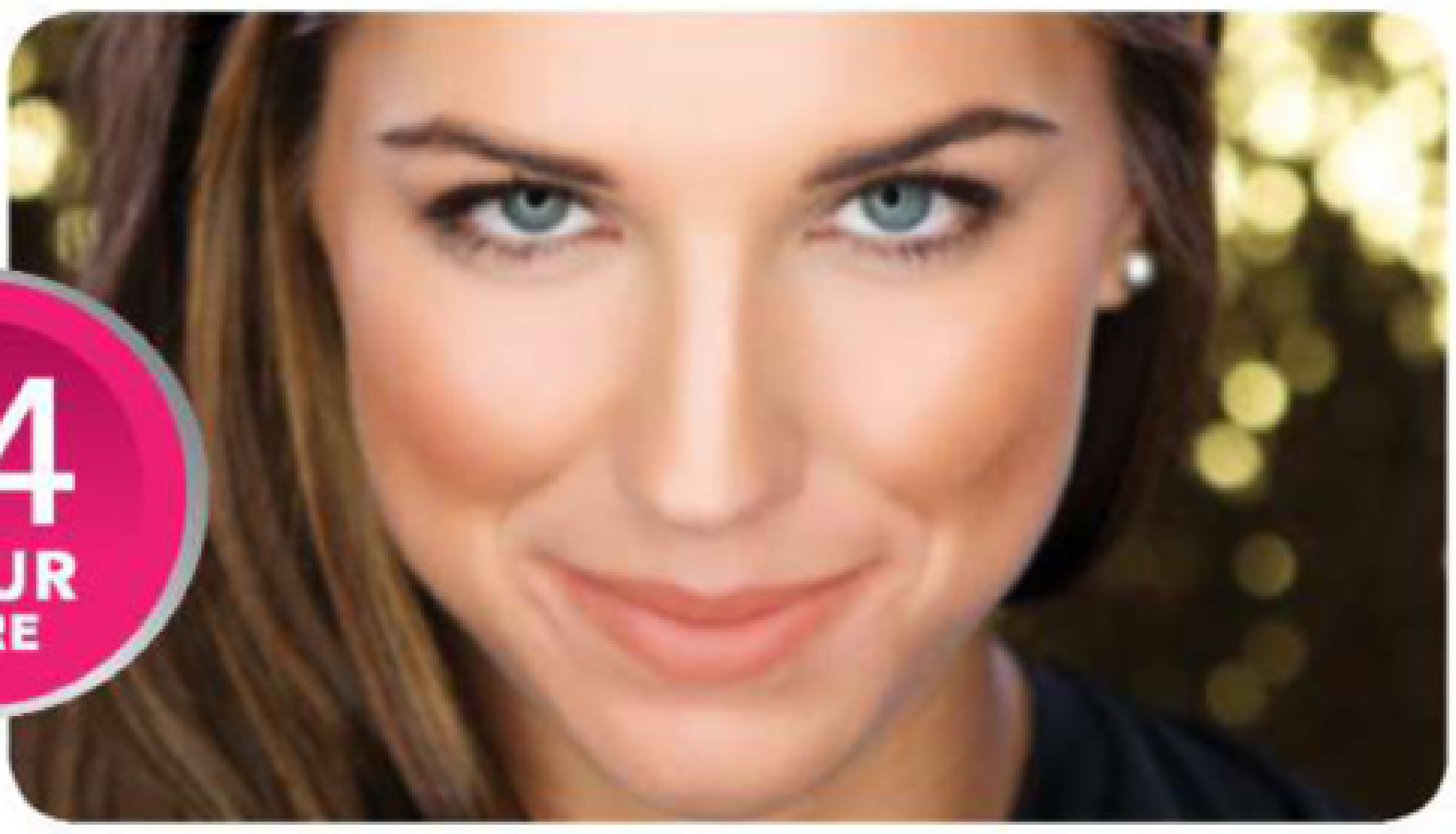

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SHAPE
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GIRLS GONE WILD
Amy Poehler and Tina Fey team up again on the big screen for *Sisters* (out Dec. 18). "Every seven years—we've made a blood pact—we must [work together] or else one of us will turn into dust," says Poehler.

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Feedback

WRITE TO US! → EW_LETTERS@EW.COM

Criminally Overrated?

What's all the fuss about? That's what a band of flummoxed EW.com readers had to say about these so-called pop culture pearls (a few of which found a home on our own best-of-the-year lists).

▶ *Hannibal*

The first season was mostly incredible, but season 2? Disaster. I have no respect for shows that build up amazing secondary characters—mostly women and people of color—then sideline/kill them to further the mansplaining of the leads. ***—LILY***

▶ YA novels

I didn't want to read about teens when I was one, and now that I'm older I find them just as whiny. Coming-of-age stories with special heroines and angsty love triangles bore me. ***—SQUAREPEG***

▶ *Birdman*

It's technically impressive, but the characters are insufferable, and the story is based on stereotypes and conventional wisdom. It's not even good conventional wisdom. ***—DANIELM80***

▶ *Archer*

It's not that I don't occasionally appreciate crude humor, but each episode seems to have the same plot, jokes, and conclusion (Archer never learns anything from his adventures). ***—DAVEN***

▶ *The Walking Dead*

I made it all the way through season 2, but it still didn't interest me. I figure if I can't get into it after two seasons, there's no point in going any further. ***—FOXYKNOXYHART***

Jack Be Nimble

I am so excited that *Unbroken*'s **Jack O'Connell** is finally getting his break (#1340). He was absolutely brilliant on *Skins*. His character, Cook, was a terrible friend and wrecking ball, but Jack somehow made him endearing and empathetic. I can't wait for more people to see how talented he is.

LAUREN HASHIMA
Los Angeles

Fallen Hero

Thank you for "Is This Goodbye, Cliff Huxtable?" (News and Notes). It is the first piece I've read about **Bill Cosby** lately that speaks directly to my pain. When I was 11, long before Cliff Huxtable, there was *Wonderfulness*, one of Cosby's Grammy-winning LPs from the '60s. At a time when I needed a grown-up, he told me stories and made me laugh out loud. Is Bill Cosby the gifted comedian no longer real because of Bill Cosby the flawed human being? For me, it is just the opposite. Cosby the human being, the hero I created in my mind, is no longer real. But his ingenious humor? That rock is still in place, though it is now eroded and cracked. I can't listen to his records or watch his DVDs right now. And I can't stop the tears when they come—for all of those women, for his family, and for his fans who are now stumbling and lost.

ANGELA JANNOTTA
Hopkins, Minn.

What the Dickens?

In your chronology of the various versions of ***A Christmas Carol*** (Binge!), you omitted **Patrick Stewart**'s portrayals of Ebenezer Scrooge. He had one-man stage shows in L.A. and New York and then reprised the role in a 1999 TV movie. You included Susan Lucci and Tori Spelling but not Stewart? Shame on you, EW!

JOSEPH BAILEY
Newark, N.Y.

Patrick Stewart in 1999's *A Christmas Carol*

Here's Jimmy!

I could not agree more with your decision to make **Jimmy Fallon** Entertainer of the Year (#1341). There was a *Tonight Show* episode where he said his goal was to make people forget about their problems for an hour every night, and he certainly does that for me.

HEATHER HENKE
Wisconsin Rapids, Wis.

Singing Sensation

"Who is **Sam Smith**? Holy voice of an angel!" is the text I sent out to my friends the night he performed on *Saturday Night Live*. I had goose bumps when I heard him sing, and only a handful of artists have done that to me (Whitney!). Changed me in an instant, and that's a 2014 best. You got that one right, EW.

KATHRYN RINKER
McCall, Idaho

Watching the Detectives

It was on your worst list, but I really enjoy Debra Messing's ***The Mysteries of Laura***. A decent show is all about the cast's chemistry, and this is one I make a point of watching.

SHARON HOULE
Waterville, Maine

CORRECTION

We misidentified a photo of Birdman *screenwriter Armando Bó as the film's director, Alejandro G. Iñárritu (#1340, News and Notes).*

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Entertainment WEEKLY

UNLEASHED!

(Clockwise) *Guardians of the Galaxy*, Taylor Swift, *Sons of Anarchy*, and *True Detective*

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The 100 Biggest Pop Culture Moments of the Year

Were the past 12 months in entertainment a time-spinning flat circle or more of a jaunty groove with *Guardians of the Galaxy*'s adorable dancing Groot? Starting Dec. 19, head to ***ew.com/bigin2014*** for our editors' survey of the year's gasp-inducing, tweetable events, scenes, or flubs (hello, Ms. Adele Dazeem). From Taylor Swift's chart-busting *1989* to *Sons of Anarchy*'s shocking deaths to the celeb photo hacking scandal, we pick the 100 most noteworthy moments of 2014.

MOBILE

EW ON THE GO

EW's digital edition features bonus images and trailers from projects highlighted in our 2015 Preview, including *Jurassic World*, *Mad Max: Fury Road*, *Chappie*, *In the Heart of the Sea*, *Insurgent*, and more. To find it, download the Google Play Newsstand app, or go to Apple Newsstand or *ew.com/ewdigital*.

RADIO

2014'S TOP STARS

Count down to the new year as ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY Radio on SiriusXM Channel 105 airs the 25 best interviews of 2014. On Dec. 24 at 7 a.m. and throughout the week, EW Radio hosts will share their favorite sit-downs with Lisa Kudrow (above), Jim Parsons, Melissa McCarthy, Robert Downey Jr., and more.

EW.COM

BART TURNS 25

Hi-diddly-ho! In honor of the 25th anniversary of *The Simpsons*, EW.com ranks the 25 most *cowabunga!*-worthy episodes and looks back at the holiday special that started it all. Santa's Little Helper would approve.

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The Week's Best Soundbites

"Hey, let's wait in the first-class lounge like the other HBO Go subscribers."

—Schmidt (Max Greenfield), killing time with Cece (Hannah Simone) at LAX, on *New Girl*

"Leave Santa to the white folks. Let's get a black James Bond first: Idris Elba."

—Ruby (Jenifer Lewis) on *black-ish*

"Tupac might be a political leader if he was alive, but then again, Tupac might be in a Tyler Perry movie right now, so you don't know."

—Andre (Chris Rock) in *Top Five*

"I am the god! I am the god!"

—Ramses (Joel Edgerton) in *Exodus: Gods and Kings*

"Yesterday, Facebook revealed that Ebola was the most popular Facebook topic in the U.S. this year, with the World Cup coming in sixth. So welcome to America—where even Ebola is more popular than soccer."

—Jimmy Fallon on *The Tonight Show*

"My name is Martin Freeman. Unless I embarrass myself, in which case my name is Colin Firth."

—Martin Freeman, hosting *Saturday Night Live*

"Boy, you're like an embroidered pillow with feet."

—Bonnie (Allison Janney), razzing platitude-happy Marjorie (Mimi Kennedy), on *Mom*

"I got this."

—Jax (Charlie Hunnam), before taking his final ride, on *Sons of Anarchy*

"Calling Sony comments 'racially insensitive remarks' instead of 'racist'? U can put a cherry on a pile of sh*t but it don't make it a sundae."

—Shonda Rhimes, tweeting her reaction to leaked emails speculating about what movies President Obama might like

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MAN SEEKING WOMAN

Love is strange.
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*The **Top 10** Things We Love This Week*

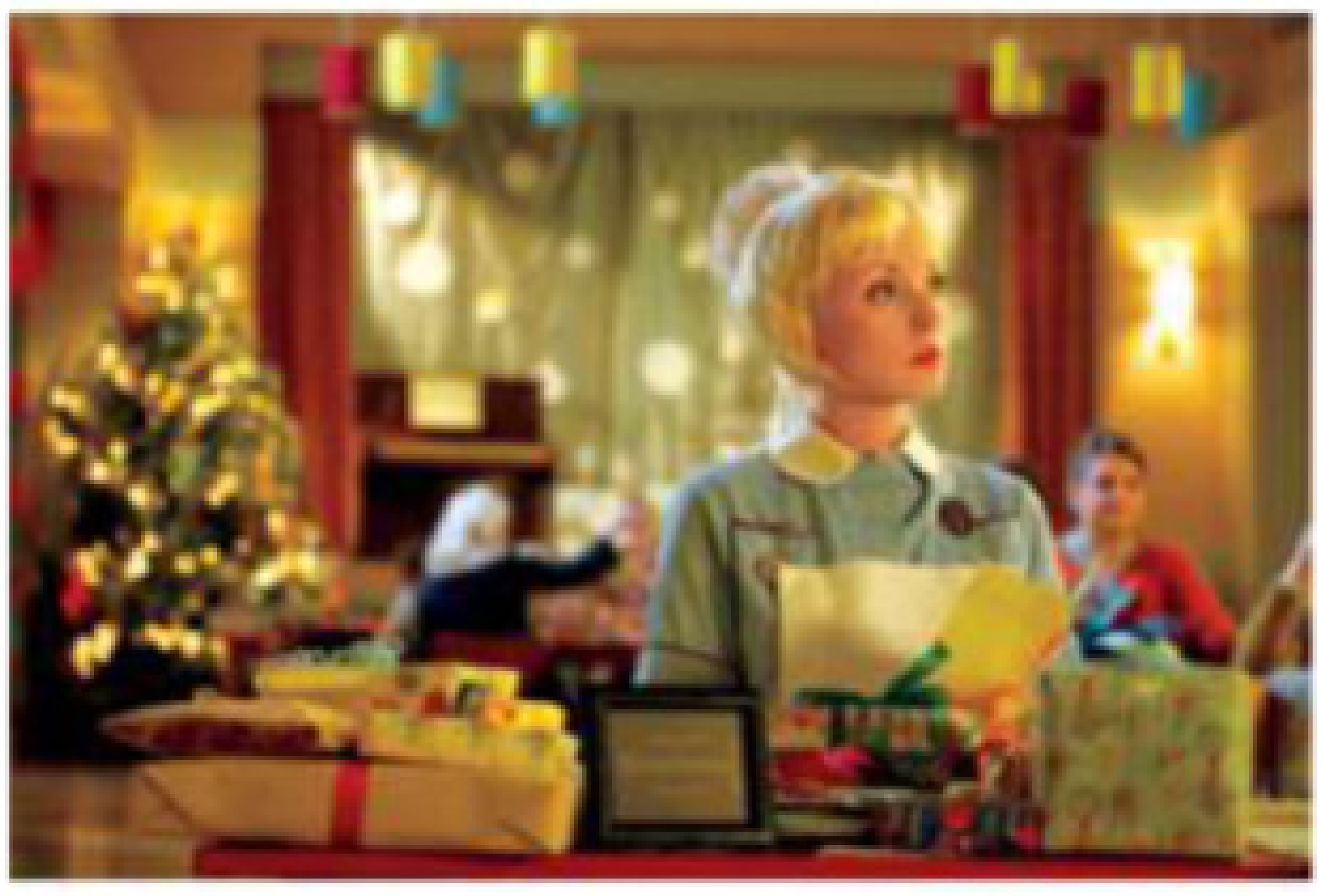
The Must List

1

SELMA

Ava DuVernay's masterful retelling of the keystone 1965 civil rights marches from Selma, Ala., to Montgomery is far more than just an MLK biopic or historical recreation; it's a poignant reminder that the past is really a lot closer than we think. *(PG-13)*

Colman Domingo, André Holland, David Oyelowo, and Stephan James

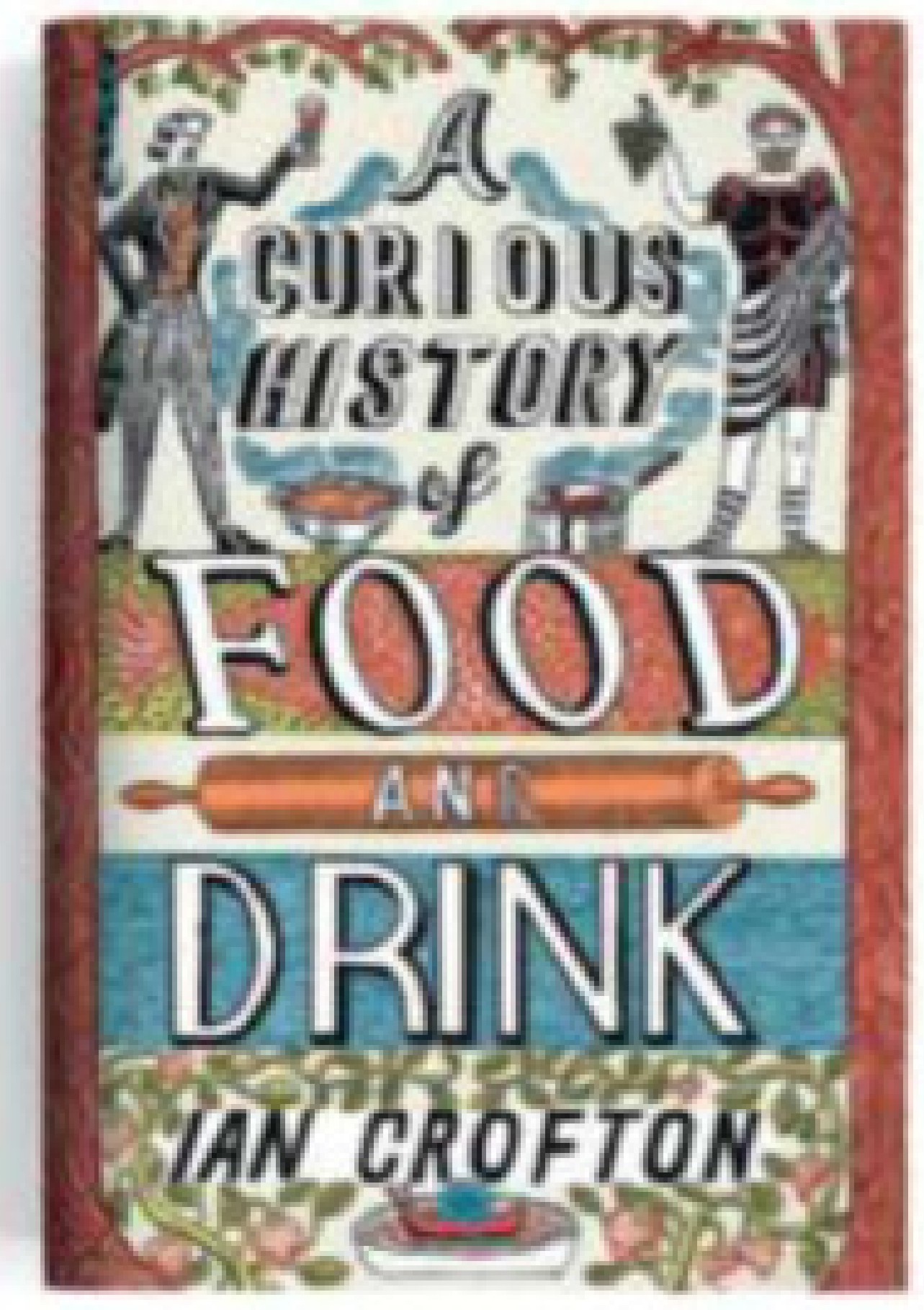


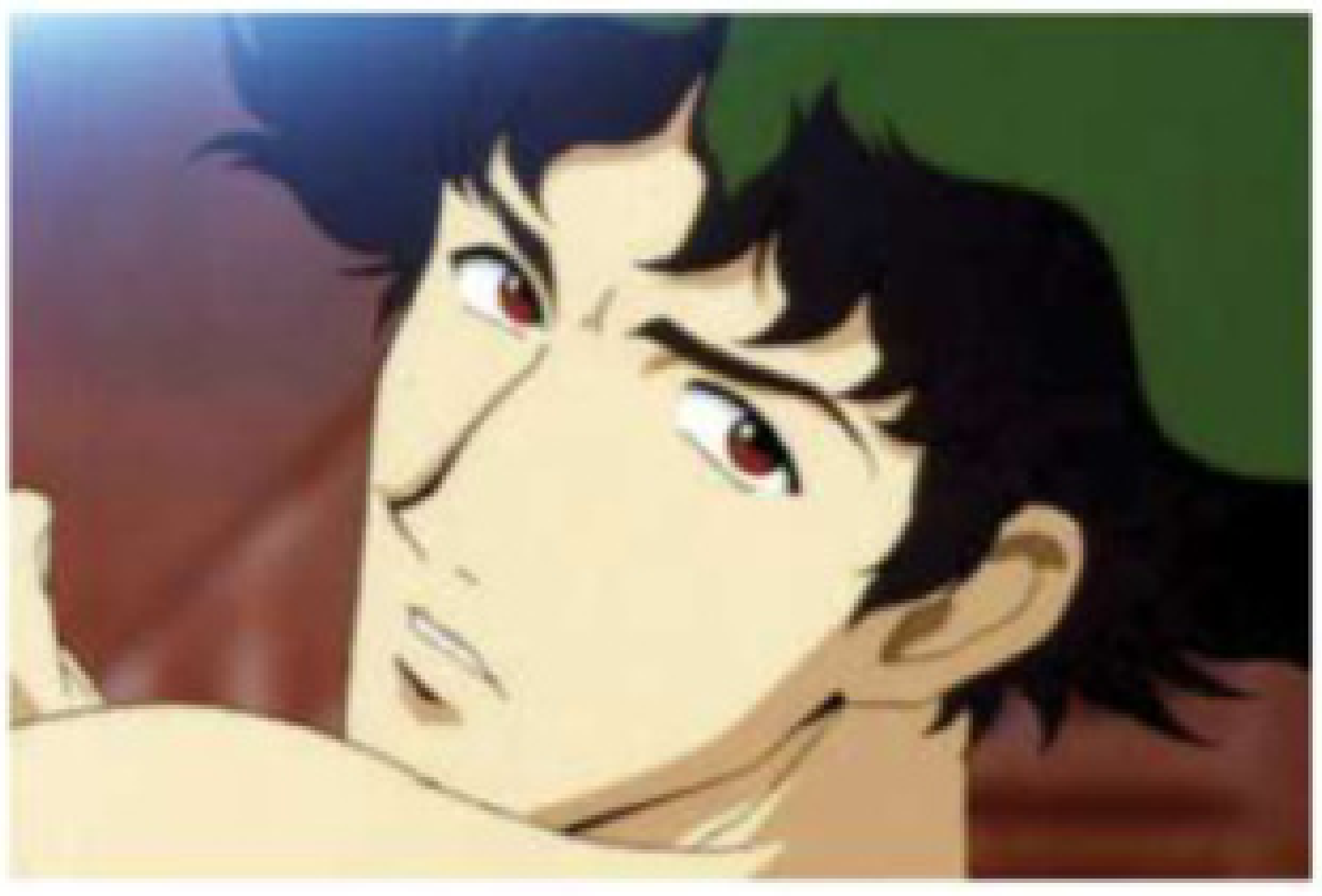
2 CALL THE MIDWIFE

Oft-heard but never-seen narrator Vanessa Redgrave makes her onscreen debut as the Nonnatus House convent's retired midwife Jennifer Worth during the drama's stirring holiday special. *(PBS, Dec. 25, 8 p.m.)*

3 A CURIOUS HISTORY OF FOOD AND DRINK, by Ian Crofton

Explore the origin of noodles, Worcestershire sauce, and hippo soup in this eye-opening tome about the things we eat—and even more fascinating, the things we *don't*, like the pheasant brains and flamingo tongues favored by Roman emperors.





4 COWBOY BEBOP: THE COMPLETE SERIES

Animated tales of existentially troubled intergalactic bounty hunters arrive on Blu-ray, and will thrill folks who dug the space-cowboy appeal of *Guardians of the Galaxy*.

SELMA: ATSUSHI NISHIJIMA; *CALL THE MIDWIFE*: DES WILLIE/NEAL STREET PRODUCTIONS

Illustration by **JESSE LENZ**

AN AMAZON ORIGINAL SERIES
MOZART IN THE JUNGLE
STREAM ALL EPISODES 12/23
ONLY ON amazon Prime

5 ALIVE 2007, Daft Punk

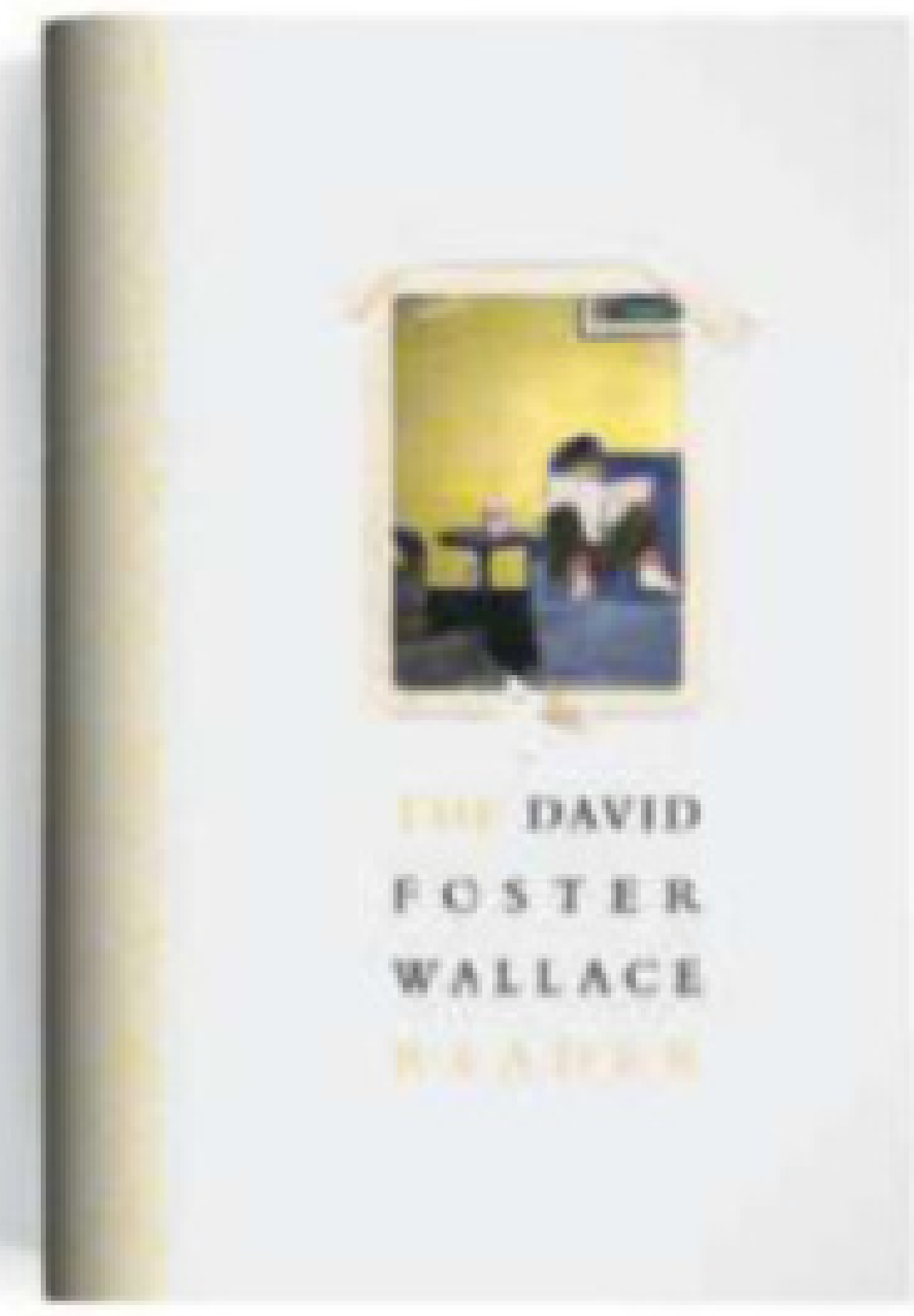
France's greatest robo-exports revive their two extraordinary live albums, *Alive 1997* and *Alive 2007*, via a set of superdeluxe vinyl reissues, featuring a book of photos from the shows and a specially designed slipmat for your turntable.

6 **BIG EYES** Margaret Keane's creepy kitsch is a natural fit for Tim Burton, and his colorful new film about the painter (Amy Adams) and her creatively usurping husband (Christoph Waltz) is one of the director's best in years. *(PG-13)*

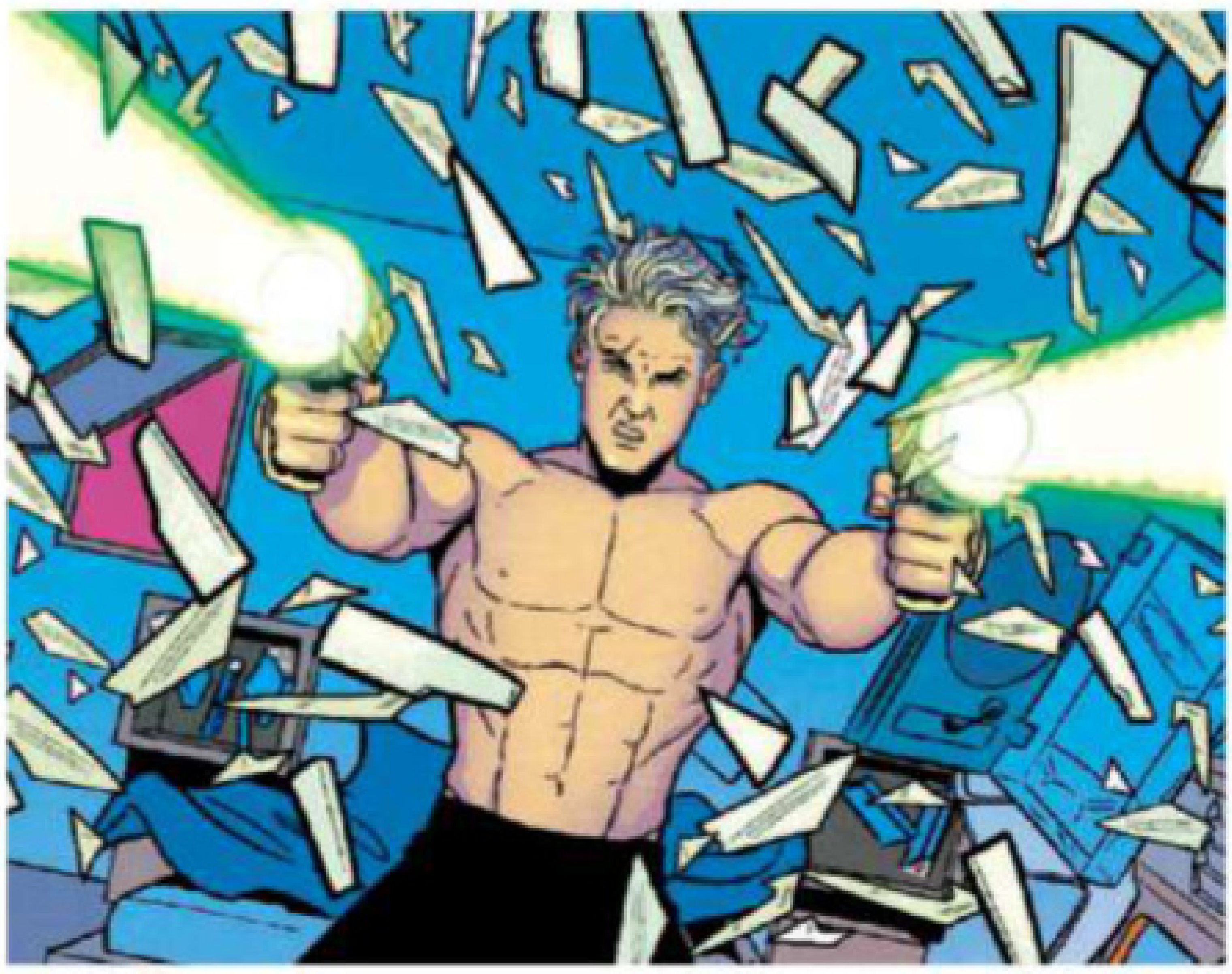
7 DENZEL WASHINGTON IS THE GREATEST ACTOR OF ALL TIME PERIOD podcast

Comics W. Kamau Bell and Kevin Avery take a deep dive into Denzel's filmography—from *A Soldier's Story* to *The Bone Collector*.

8 THE DAVID FOSTER WALLACE READER Ever felt guilty for lying at a cocktail party about having read Wallace's epically long *Infinite Jest*? Catch up on the conversation with this sampler of the late genius' work, complete with critical essays and previously unpublished writings. It's a worthwhile starting point.



9 DARK HEARTS: THE SECRET OF HAUNTING MELISSA The serial horror-movie app, which is a sequel to 2013's *Haunting Melissa*, unfolds in chapters of varying lengths—and each time you rewatch an episode, new audio and visual clues are revealed. *(iTunes)*



10 **YOUNG AVENGERS** A 15-issue collection that is a fantastic superhero story and reads like one of the year's best YA novels. Pint-size Avengers race to stop a world-threatening parasite while dealing with "plentiful feels." The comic equivalent of a pop song you can't quit playing.

BIG EYES: LEAH GALLO; DAFT PUNK: DAVID BLACK; *THE BONE COLLECTOR*: © UNIVERSAL/COURTESY EVERETT COLLECTION

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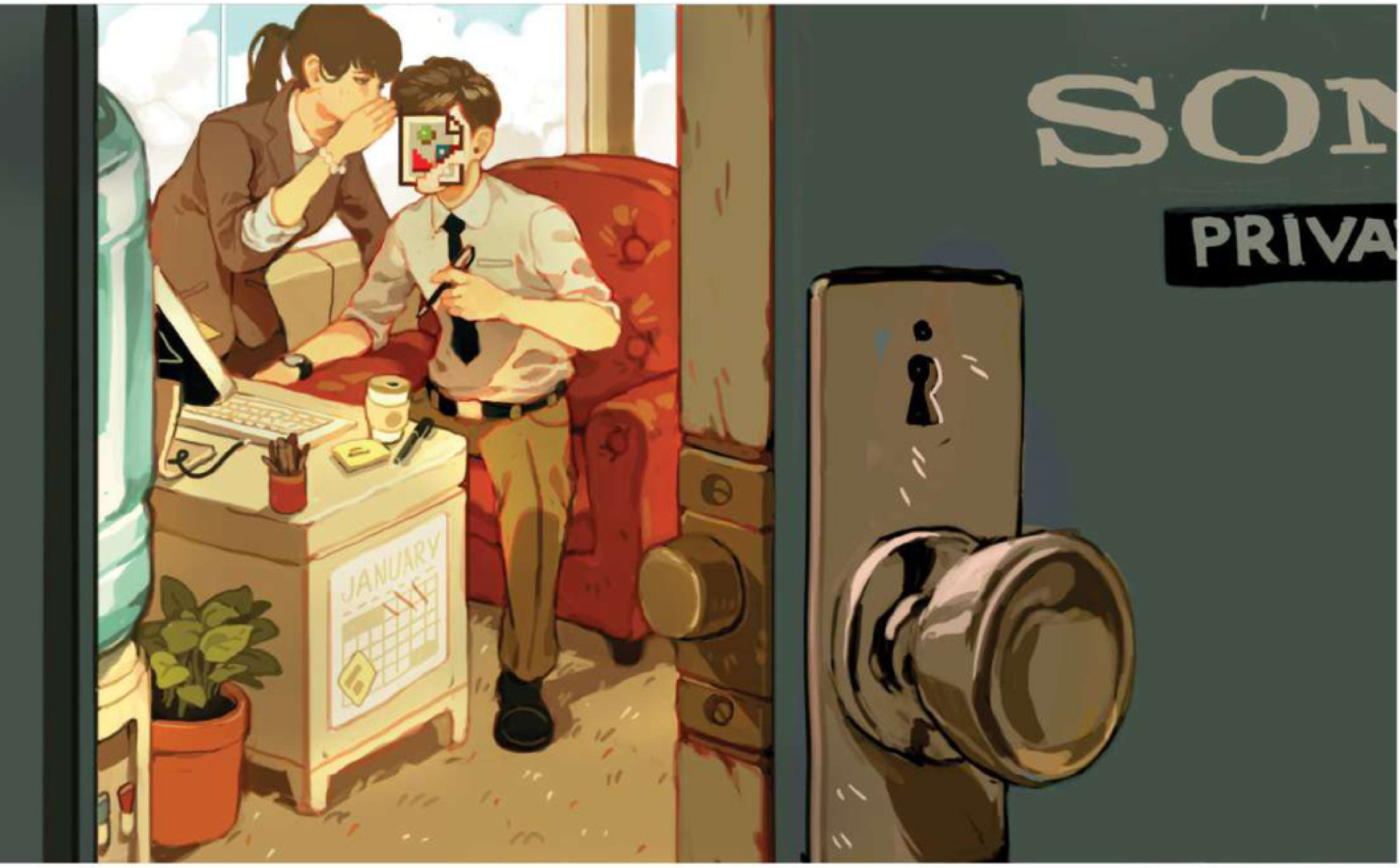
COCKTAIL RECIPES INSPIRED BY OUR FAVORITE HOLIDAY FILMS [**P.** 20]

News+Notes



Hollywood's Hacker Panic

Last week, private emails from Sony Pictures were leaked, revealing what execs really think about **Angelina Jolie**, **President Obama**, and others. And then on Dec. 16, it suddenly got scary.

BY NICOLE SPERLING

IN HOLLYWOOD, where your stock can rise only if someone else's falls, schadenfreude is as common as kale salad. So the hundred-terabyte hack three weeks ago into Sony Pictures Entertainment and the slew of data it has unveiled should have had the town jubilant with "hate joy." And it was. At first.

The hack has been attributed to the mysterious activist group Guardians of Peace, sympathizers with the North Korean government who are outraged over *The Interview*. The $43 million lowbrow Sony comedy stars Seth Rogen and James Franco and features the assassination of North Korean dictator Kim Jong-un. Initial leaks included pirated copies of current and upcoming films (*Fury* and *Annie*, among others), executive salaries, and spreadsheets listing how much money Sony's movies made (or lost). Employees rushed home when their Social Security numbers and bank-routing codes were published online. But it wasn't until the ruthless

Illustration by **SACHIN TENG**

email exchanges between Sony Pictures co-chairman Amy Pascal and top-shelf producer Scott Rudin (*The Social Network*) were made public that everyone paid attention.

In the emails Rudin called Angelina Jolie "a minimally talented spoiled brat"; Pascal was made to look a fool, Rudin a bully. Then they engaged in racist chatter about President Obama and the movies they predicted he'd love. Both Pascal and Rudin have since apologized. (Pascal said, in part, "The content of my emails to Scott were insensitive and inappropriate but are not an accurate reflection of who I am." And Rudin told Deadline.com, in part, "I made a series of remarks that were meant only to be funny, but in the cold light of day...are not funny at all. To anybody I've offended, I'm profoundly and deeply sorry.") But the harm has been done. The question is: How devastating is it?

(Clockwise from top left) James Franco and Seth Rogen in the incendiary North Korea-set film *The Interview*; Angelina Jolie and Sony Pictures co-chairman Amy Pascal after unflattering emails from producer Scott Rudin about the actress were leaked; Rudin and Pascal in happier times

THE INTERVIEW: ED ARAQUEL; JOLIE AND PASCAL: ALEX J. BERLINER/AP IMAGES; RUDIN AND PASCAL: JEAN BAPTISTE LACROIX/WIREIMAGE.COM

The movie business can accommodate all kinds of extreme behavior, but what it can't abide is transparency. A director or star with a dead career can rocket overnight with one hit, and enemies can become besties over a single script. So no one ever, ever says what she or he really thinks—at least not in public. "As depressing as it is, everybody knows nobody is friends," says an executive at a competing studio. But that doesn't mean all is forgiven.

Pascal, one of the longest-standing studio chiefs in the business, has endured a rough patch in the past year, including shareholder unrest, multiple rounds of layoffs, and the dismantling of her executive team. As of press time, she had survived this as well. Screenwriter Aaron Sorkin and George Clooney have already voiced their support. At the premiere of *The Interview* last week, director and star Rogen thanked Pascal for "having the balls" to make his movie. And at a town-hall meeting on Dec. 15, Sony Entertainment CEO Michael Lynton vowed to the staff that the hack "won't take us down."

"PEOPLE ARE SAYING, 'I CAN'T TALK ABOUT THIS ON EMAIL. CAN YOU CALL ME?'"
—JUDD APATOW

But as revealing and juicy as Pascal's Jolie-centered conversation with Rudin was, it was her Obama comments that caused the most damage. Sony is considered one of the more progressive studios when it comes to opportunities for black filmmakers and executives, so the exchange stung. "I can't imagine what other people who have worse track records are saying," says one black exec.

With every day bringing new leaks, Hollywood has already changed. Email is out; cell phones are in. "I know things are getting bad because lately a lot of people are saying, 'I can't talk about this on email. Can you call me?'" says filmmaker Judd Apatow, who recently took a stand on Twitter against the media outlets printing excerpts of the stolen documents.

What remains uncertain, unnervingly, is the true identity of the hackers. While many are pointing to North Korea, others think it could be an inside job, and at least one rival executive suspects that Russia is involved. Security has been beefed up on the Sony lot in Culver City, and the studio is quickly adopting new low-tech policies. Drive-on passes to the lot are being handwritten, large files can't be transmitted over the company's temporary servers, and if you eat at the studio's commissary you have to pay cash.

Despite all that, at press time the studio had not swerved from the Dec. 25 nationwide release of *The Interview*. On Dec. 16, hackers purportedly representing Guardians of Peace released a message threatening a 9/11-type attack on theaters on opening day: "Soon all the world will see what an awful movie Sony Pictures Entertainment has made. The world will be full of fear. Remember the 11th of September 2001. We recommend you to keep yourself distant from the places [where *The Interview* is shown]."

Hollywood is watching closely to see if Sony caves to the hackers. "This is now a case of espionage, sabotage, and terrorism all wrapped up in one," says a veteran industry insider. Whether or not Sony releases the film is, he says, "the most important issue facing this community." What had started as titillating inside dirt had instantly become about more than egos and careers. ■

Q&A

SNL's Rookie of the Year

In October, veteran stand-up comedian **Leslie Jones** made headlines when she walked from the *SNL* writers' room to the stage. We jumped on the phone with Jones to discuss the learning curve—and, by the way, the 47-year-old breakthrough knows it's been steep. **—HILLARY BUSIS**

You've been a member of the cast for a few months now. I wanted to ask about your first live sketch, with Chris Rock, when you froze up. What happened there?

I'm going to be honest with you: It was literally the scariest moment of my life. Between [dress and air], they changed a couple of stage directions. I was supposed to go off stage and then come back on immediately. Or I wasn't supposed to leave, or something like that. But I went off and when I came back, I was lost. I didn't know my position, I didn't know what color I was on the cue cards. It was just one of those moments of "Oh, s---." And in my head it's like, "Say something! Say something!" Finally, I figured out what my line was. Oh my God. It seemed like it [lasted] 10 minutes.

With Chris Rock on *SNL*

How did you feel afterward?

I thought everyone was going to be pissed at me, or I was going to get in trouble. But I love the people at my job, because they all surrounded me with straight love. [*SNL* executive producer] Lorne [Michaels] came straight up to me and was like, "Don't worry about it. It's live TV." The cast was all "Trust me, everybody has had that moment."

Is any part of you relieved now—as in, the worst thing that could happen has *already* happened?

Right! I think I was waiting for it: "Dude, what if you freeze up?" So now that it's done, and I got it out of the way, there's no fear.

You have a ton of stand-up experience. How was your transition to sketch work?

I'm really good at stand-up. I always win at stand-up. And writing a sketch is completely different. When you're writing a sketch, it has to be surrounded by a situation. It can't just be out of the air.

So how did you learn to write in this different medium?

It's just, like, trial and error. The one thing I learned is that I had to take my ego completely out of it. I'm different when I perform now. I told Lorne I have new shelves in my brain with information that I didn't have before.

After last year's media circus surrounding diversity on *SNL*, have you felt a lot of pressure as a black woman in the cast?

No. I'm 47, you know? That stuff just doesn't get to me. I love making people laugh, and at this present time, no one is laughing. Everybody hates the president, we've got all this racial stuff going on. Even the people that we would watch on TV, like Cosby—a lot of stuff is happening right now where our nation is sad. As comedians, it's our job to come out and make that stuff funny. Like, you know how when you take your medicine, you put it in some juice so you can drink it? It's our job to be the juice.

JONES: LLOYD BISHOP/NBC; *SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE*: DANA EDELSON/NBC

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REFERENCES:

1. Alcon data on file, 2011. 2. Opti-Free® PureMoist® Multi-Purpose Disinfecting Solution Package Insert. 3. Lally J, Ketelson H, Borazjani R, et al. A new lens care solution provides moisture and comfort with today's CL's. Optician 4/1/2011, Vol 241 Issue 6296, 42-46. 4. Davis J, Ketelson HA, Shows A, Meadows DL. A lens care solution designed for wetting silicone hydrogel materials. ARVO Meeting Abstracts April 11, 2010 51:3417. 5. Campbell R, Kame G, Leach N, et al. Clinical benefits of a new multi-purpose disinfecting solution in silicone hydrogel and soft contact lens users. Eye & Contact Lens 2012; 38(2);93-101. 6. Alcon data on file, 2010. 7. Senchyna M, Stauffer P, Davis J, Ketelson H, Meadows D. Characterization of a multi-purpose lens solution designed for silicone hydrogel materials. Invest Ophthalmol Vis Sci. 2010; 51:E-abstract 3426. 8. Huo Y, Perry S, Rygalov A, et al. Chemical and frictional analysis of silicone hydrogel lens surfaces. Invest Ophthalmol Vis Sci. 2010; 51:E-abstract 3422.

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WATCH THIS > DRINK THAT

HOLIDAY CHEER(S)

Nothing's cozier than curling up to watch your favorite holiday entertainment—unless you add a killer cocktail. To get you in the spirit (or just through a night with the family), we asked mixologists at four bars across the country for some ultra-festive libations. —**JEFFERY LINDENMUTH**

WATCH ***It's a Wonderful Life***

DRINK **Windmill Winter Wine**, created by Louise Owens, Windmill Lounge, Dallas

> A second-rate angel (Henry Travers) walks into a bar and orders mulled wine, "heavy on the cinnamon and light on the cloves." With raisins instead of sugar, this version is as sweet and warming as the Jimmy Stewart classic.

1 bottle dry red wine
1 cup bourbon
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup raisins
2 cinnamon sticks
8 whole cloves
1 orange, halved
1 slice fresh ginger $\frac{1}{4}$" thick

> Pour wine and bourbon into a slow cooker. Place other ingredients into cheesecloth and tie closed, then add to the slow cooker. Heat for 30–45 minutes (but don't boil!). Ladle into glass mugs and garnish with fresh citrus or dried fruits. *(Serves 8)*

WATCH ***Elf***

DRINK **The Bunker**, created by Andre Barnhill, Woodberry Kitchen, Baltimore

> An adopted human elf (Will Ferrell) maintains a strict and nutritious diet of the four main elf food groups: candy, candy canes, candy corn, and syrup. Cheers to good health, happiness, and Zooey Deschanel with this maple-syrup-laced whiskey cocktail.

1 $\frac{3}{4}$ oz. Breuckelen rye & corn
$\frac{1}{2}$ oz. Italian amaro
$\frac{1}{2}$ oz. maple syrup
2 dashes orange bitters
2 dashes old-fashioned bitters

> Combine all of the ingredients in a mixing glass with ice. Stir vigorously before straining into a glass over fresh ice cubes. Garnish with a bay leaf. *(Serves 1)*

WATCH ***Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer***

DRINK **Santa's Snowcone**, created by H. Joseph Ehrmann, Elixir, San Francisco

> This red-and-green cocktail creation uses retro ingredients popular in the 1960s, making it the perfect pairing for the kitschy 1964 stop-motion classic. Who's got the red nose now?

1 oz. Heering cherry liqueur
1 oz. half-and-half
1 oz. Chartreuse
2 Luxardo maraschino cherries

> Fill a large glass with crushed ice and pour the Heering down the side so it rests at the bottom. Pour the half-and-half over the back of a spoon to float it on the Heering, then do the same with the Chartreuse. Garnish with two cherries and stir before drinking. *(Serves 1)*

WATCH ***National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation***

DRINK **Oaxacan Eggnog**, created by Brandyn Tepper, Hinoki & the Bird, Los Angeles

> Refill the gang's Marty Moose mugs with this rich and creamy eggnog, which gets its kick from south-of-the-border booze.

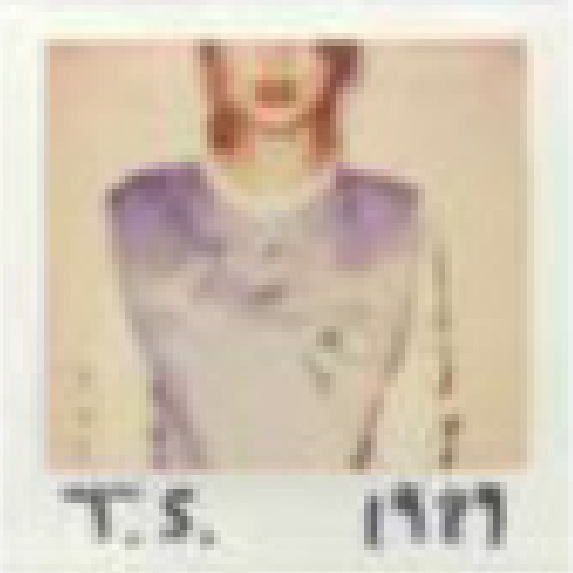
12 oz. reposado tequila
16 oz. amontillado sherry
4 oz. mescal
4 oz. Becherovka
36 oz. whole milk
24 oz. heavy cream
16 oz. granulated sugar
12 eggs

> In a blender, combine liquor, sugar, milk, and cream and mix on low speed. Stop the blender, add the eggs, and give a few pulses to mix. Refrigerate before serving. Garnish with a cinnamon stick and star anise. *(Serves 15)*

The Princess Diaries

Pop's reigning princess is looking to dethrone the Queen of Arendelle. Taylor Swift's *1989*—released only two months ago—just might outsell the massively successful *Frozen* soundtrack, currently 2014's top album. The race won't come to a close until the clock strikes midnight on Jan. 1, so in the meantime, here's how TayTay and Elsa compare in a head-to-head battle. Keep it clean, ladies. —*Kat Ward*

ALBUM SALES (as of press time)



1989 **2.7 million**	*Frozen* soundtrack **3.4 million**

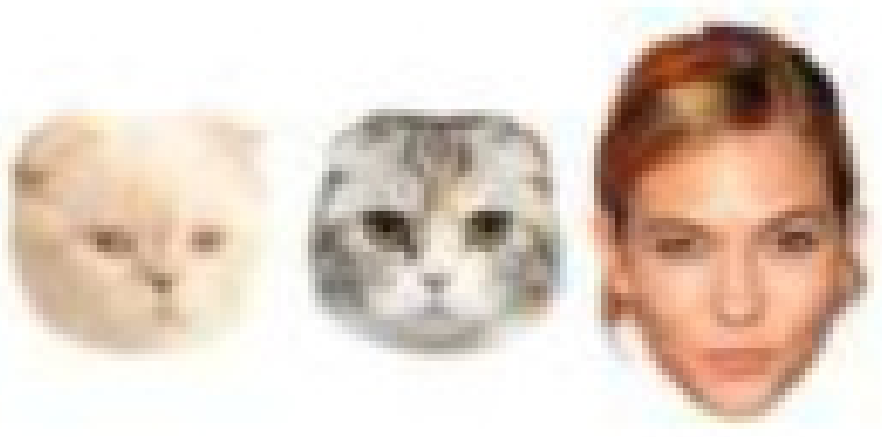
HARDWARE

7 Grammys, 2 VMAs, 21 Teen Choice awards	**2 Oscars,** 1 Golden Globe, 1 Kids' Choice award

TICKET SALES

$337M Three world tours	**$1.3B** Worldwide box office

PLUS-ONES



3 (cats Olivia Benson and Meredith Grey, model Karlie Kloss)	**2** (Olaf the snowman, sister Anna)

REAL ESTATE

$15M Penthouse in Tribeca	**$7.2M*** Ice palace on the North Mountain

---

***SOURCE:** MOVOTO REAL ESTATE (NO JOKE—THEY APPRAISED IT)

RUDOLPH THE RED-NOSED REINDEER: CLASSIC MEDIA/PHOTOFEST; SWIFT: PASCAL LE SEGRETAIN/GETTY IMAGES; *FROZEN*: DISNEY (3); OSCAR STATUETTE: ALBERT WATSON/OSCAR ® STATUETTE © AMPAS ®; CAT: RAYMOND HALL/GC IMAGES; KLOSS: BRAD BARKET/GETTY IMAGES FOR HAPPY HEARTS FUND

2015 PRIZE FIGHTER

BEST PIC BLOWOUT

The top prize for this year's Oscars will come down to art vs. heart, with *Boyhood* and *Birdman* leading the pack. BY NICOLE SPERLING

THE CONTENDERS

How the Best Picture race looks right now

↑ TRENDING UP
↓ TRENDING DOWN

SURE THINGS

The Imitation Game

Birdman

Selma ↑

Boyhood

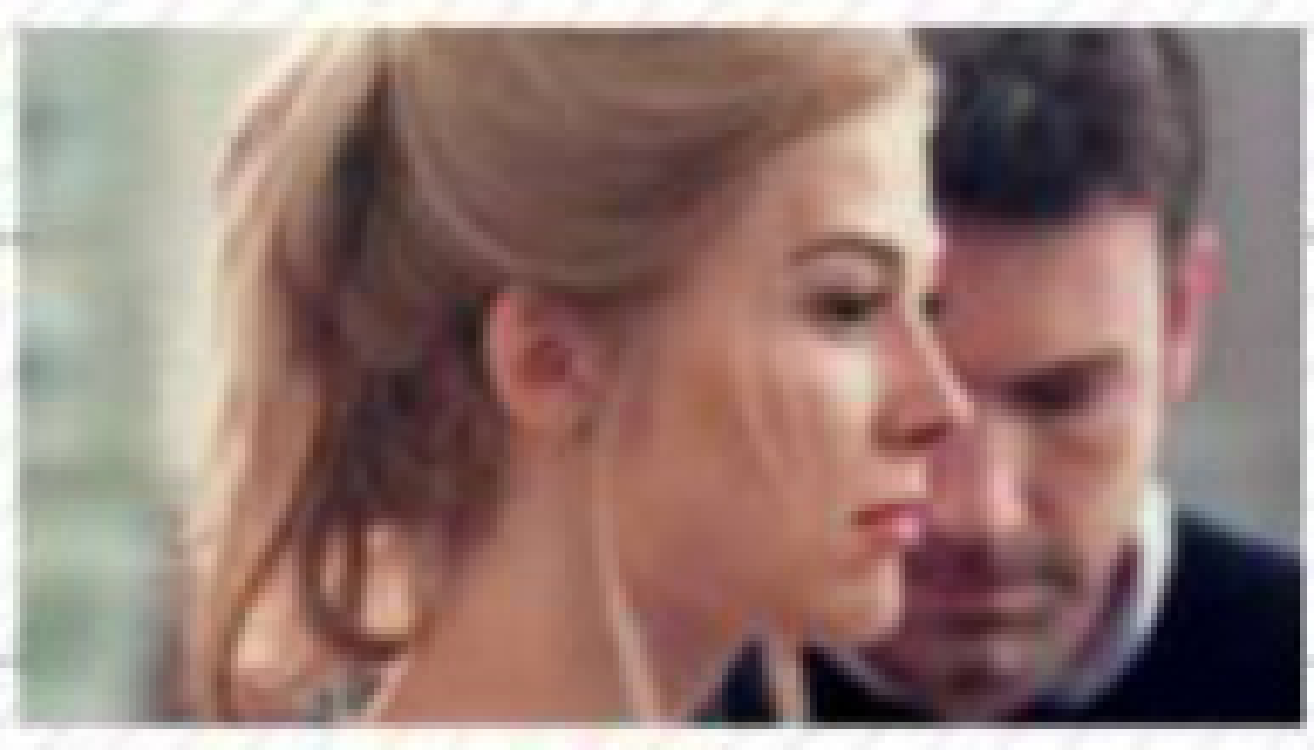
The Theory of Everything

SERIOUS THREATS

Foxcatcher

Unbroken ↓

The Grand Budapest Hotel ↑

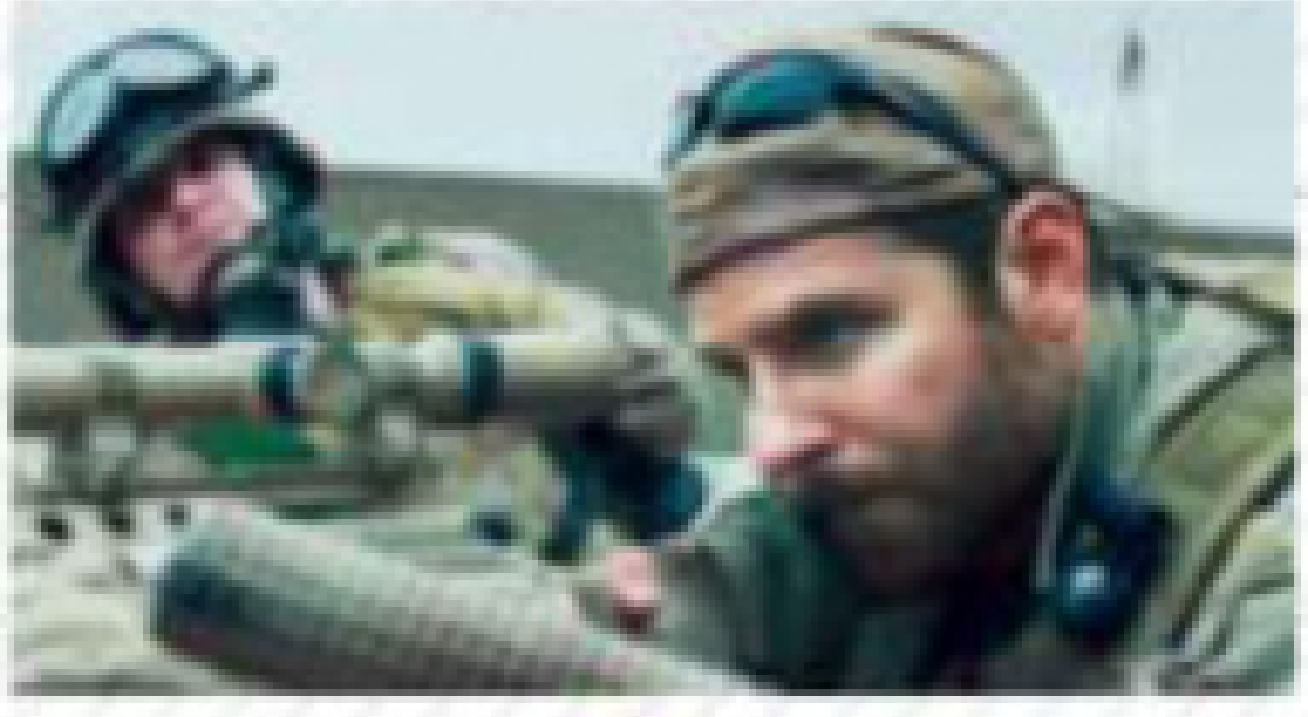


Gone Girl

POTENTIAL SPOILERS

Whiplash ↑

Wild



American Sniper

JOSEPH CAMPBELL WOULD be proud. The 2014 Best Picture race features more lone-hero journeys than at any time in recent memory. Between actual men of courage (e.g., *Unbroken*'s Louie Zamperini, *The Imitation Game*'s Alan Turing) and a woman's search for self-knowledge (*Wild*'s Cheryl Strayed), most of the contenders center on the tale of one person striving for something seemingly impossible: Stephen Hawking's search for *The Theory of Everything*, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s drive for equality in *Selma*, and Riggan Thomson's quest for redemption in *Birdman*.

Nowhere is that more evident than with the current front-runner, *Boyhood*. Richard Linklater's quiet, lyrical film about one boy's voyage to adulthood was a 12-year odyssey to make. While it may lack the grand scale and lofty themes of traditional Oscar winners, the Academy often opts for the film that touches hearts (*The King's Speech*) rather than heads (*The Social Network*). *Boyhood*, softly subversive in its disregard for the three-act structure, reaffirms that the mere act of growing up is a hero's journey all its own.

FOR MORE **OSCAR PREDICTIONS** FROM NICOLE SPERLING, GO TO *EW.COM/PRIZEFIGHTER*

OSCAR STATUETTE: OSCAR ® STATUETTE © AMPAS ®; *THE IMITATION GAME*: JACK ENGLISH; *SELMA*: ATSUSHI NISHIJIMA; *BOYHOOD*: MATT LANKES; *THE THEORY OF EVERYTHING*: LIAM DANIEL; *FOXCATCHER*: SCOTT GARFIELD; *UNBROKEN*: UNIVERSAL PICTURES; *GONE GIRL*: MERRICK MORTON; *WHIPLASH*: DANIEL MCFADDEN; *WILD*: ANNE MARIE FOX; SPERLING: PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTOPHER BEYER

Logo by **MATT LEHMAN**

ASK DALTON

Should a wisecracking spouse be allowed to ruin your favorite TV show? Our resident pop culture rule maker weighs in on that and other urgent matters of national importance. Like DVRs.

DALTON ROSS IS AN EDITOR AT LARGE AT EW AND A MASTER OF ENTERTAINMENT ETIQUETTE

Q + A

Is it permissible to ban your spouse from hate-watching a show with you that you enjoy? —JOY (@JOYVROBERTS)

This one hits close to home, as I once attempted to check out *Downton Abbey* with my upstairs-downstairs-loving spouse. That was my first mistake. My second mistake was live-tweeting the experience, unbeknownst to her. (Sample tweet: *"Your stupid questions are making me want to stab you!" —My wife, nearing the end of our first/last #DowntonAbbey coviewing.*) As a result of my insolence, I have been banned from further viewing of the British soap opera. And that's not all: I was also banned from watching *Nashville* sometime around the point I said, "You realize this show is beyond terrible and makes *Kidd Video* seem realistic by comparison, right?" (By the way, pretty sure she had no idea who or what *Kidd Video* was.) So as someone who has been on the wrong side of this, allow me to say...YES! It is totally permissible to ban your significant other from hate-watching a show you enjoy. Truth be told, I am a terrible person to watch *anything* with—constantly making annoying predictions and needlessly pointing out plot holes, even on stuff I actually *like*. It's a wonder my wife lets me near the TV at all.

How long should you keep a series in your DVR if you have never seen an episode (but mean to sometime)? Asking for a friend. —KAREN (@KAREN_E_MAGEE)

A "friend," you say. Okay, well, for the sake of clarity let's just call this friend "Karen." You are not alone, however. We all have those recorded shows we just can't seem to find the time to view. NEWSFLASH: It's a charade! We *do* have the time. We just can't bring ourselves to admit that we're never going to bother checking them out. How else to explain me watching a dude named Red making something called "Hillbilly Wine" with a condom on *Utopia* while a five-month-old episode of *The Blacklist* just sits there collecting virtual dust? I want to make that absolutely clear: I watched *multiple* episodes of *Utopia* over a DVR'd episode of *The Blacklist*. I'm not proud of that, but it woke me up to the reality of the situation. Now I try to maintain a strict one-month limit on DVR occupancy. Any more, and that's just kidding yourself—not to mention your "friend."

Is it acceptable or unacceptable to check email during previews? Fondly, recently chewed out by a stranger. —STEPHANIE (@SMUSTEFFYLOU)

First off, I'm disappointed in you, Stephanie. And more than that, you should be disappointed in yourself. I am definitely 100 percent Team Stranger on this one. Sure, go ahead and use and abuse your device as much as your thumbs desire while they are still showing those ads imploring you to head out to the lobby to buy a 184-ounce Mountain Dew with a bottomless carton of popcorn—hell, crank up the brightness levels to max for all I care—but once the previews start, you need to power that sucker down. The last thing I want to see while watching the new *Star Wars* trailer is someone perusing all the latest Snapchat selfies. Actually, that's not true. The last thing I want to see while watching the new *Star Wars* trailer is Jar Jar Binks or even the slightest hint of an Ewok, but the point stands nonetheless. The only situation where it is acceptable to take out your screen is if said preview is for a film in which nobody with any taste whatsoever could possibly be interested. This controversial amendment is known in most parts as...the Nicolas Cage Exemption.

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Illustration by **PAUL MAYBURY**

ROSS: PATRICK JAMES MILLER

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Chart Attack: The Year-End Edition

We tally up 2014's love for pop superstars, prison inmates, and one alien raccoon.

BY KAT WARD

$772 M

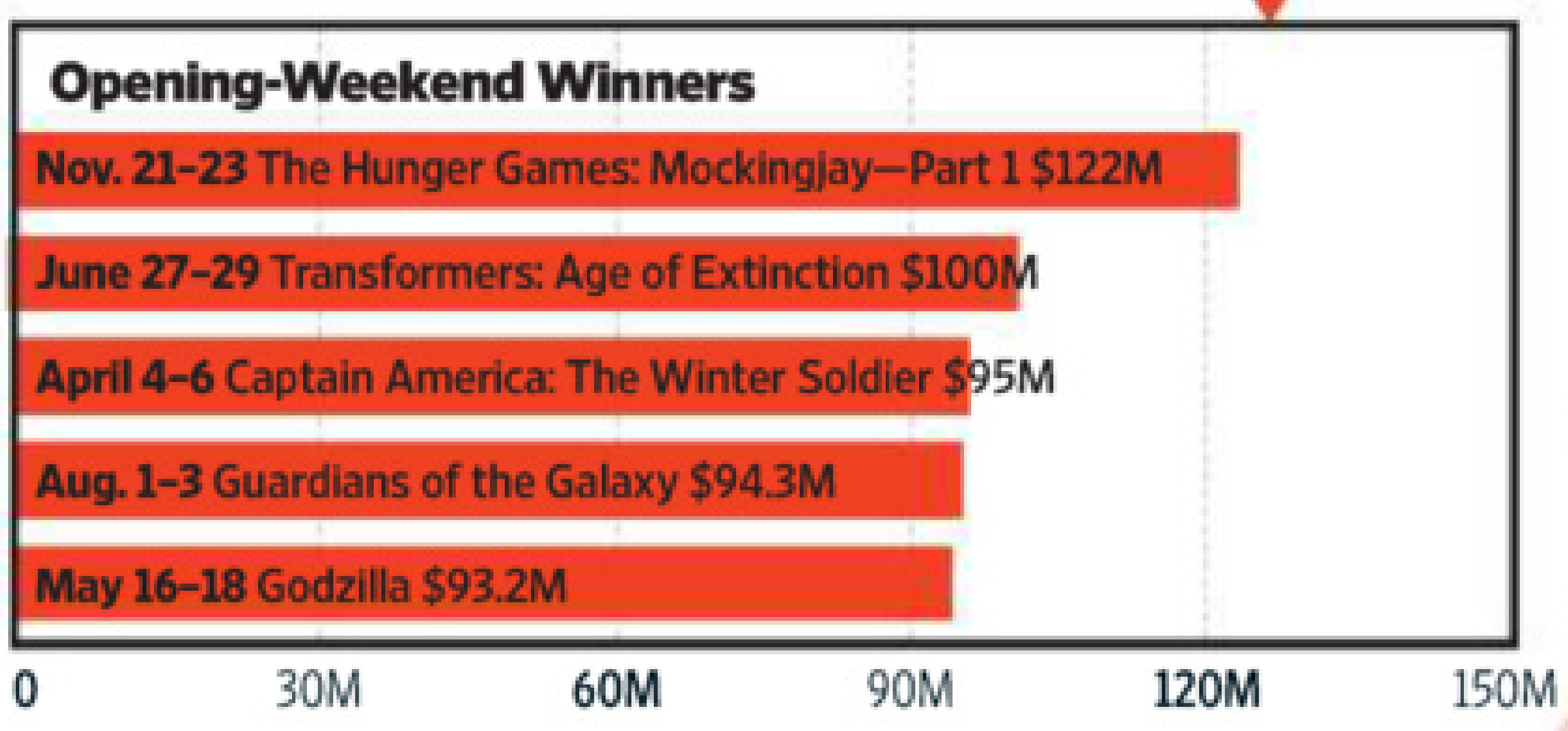
GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY'S WORLDWIDE GROSS

TOP MOVIES
THROUGH DEC. 15

1	**Guardians of the Galaxy**	$332*
2	**The Hunger Games: Mockingjay—Part 1**	$277
3	**Captain America: The Winter Soldier**	$260
4	**The LEGO Movie**	$258
5	**Transformers: Age of Extinction**	$245
6	**Maleficent**	$241
7	**X-Men: Days of Future Past**	$234
8	**Dawn of the Planet of the Apes**	$209
9	**The Amazing Spider-Man 2**	$203
10	**Godzilla**	$201

SOURCE: BOX OFFICE MOJO; *DOMESTIC GROSS IN MILLIONS

▲ These films crushed it all year at the box office, but these five were especially strong right out of the gate.



TOP ALBUMS
THROUGH DEC. 8

1 **Frozen** VARIOUS ARTISTS
2 **1989** TAYLOR SWIFT
3 **Ghost Stories** COLDPLAY
4 **In the Lonely Hour** SAM SMITH
5 **Guardians of the Galaxy: Awesome Mix Vol. 1** VARIOUS ARTISTS
6 **Beyoncé** BEYONCÉ
7 **X** ED SHEERAN
8 **The Outsiders** ERIC CHURCH
9 **5 Seconds of Summer** 5 SECONDS OF SUMMER
10 **Night Visions** IMAGINE DRAGONS

SOURCE: ITUNES

TOP STREAMED SONGS
THROUGH DEC. 3

1 **Fancy** IGGY AZALEA
2 **Dark Horse** KATY PERRY
3 **Happy** PHARRELL WILLIAMS
4 **Problem** ARIANA GRANDE
5 **All of Me** JOHN LEGEND
6 **Rude** MAGIC!
7 **Pompeii** BASTILLE
8 **Latch** DISCLOSURE
9 **Summer** CALVIN HARRIS
10 **Talk Dirty** JASON DERULO

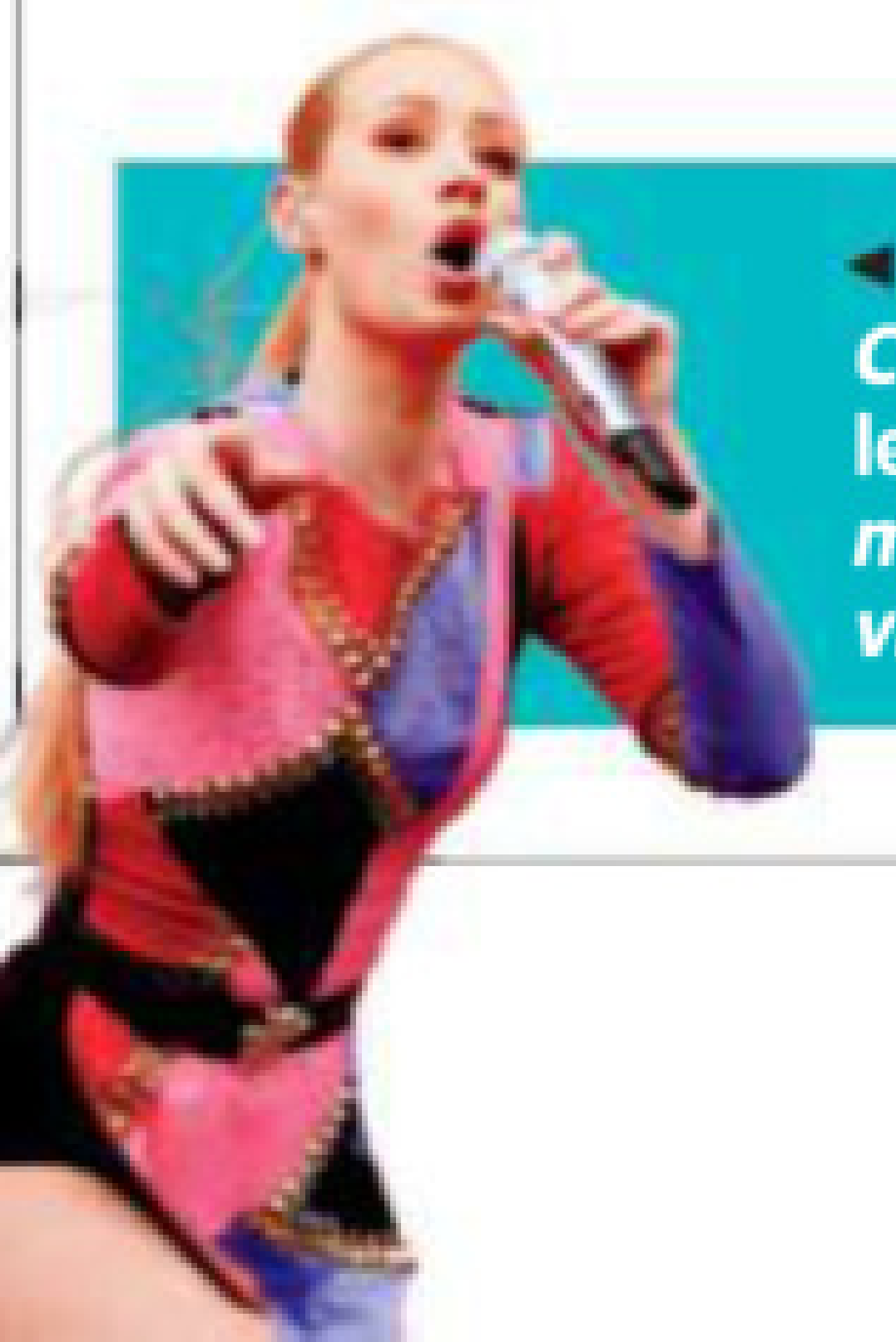
SOURCE: SPOTIFY

▲ The world got "Happy" in 2014, streaming Pharrell's anthem 260M times, making it No. 1 globally.

TOP MUSIC VIDEOS
THROUGH NOV. 30

1 **Fancy** IGGY AZALEA
2 **All About That Bass** MEGHAN TRAINOR
3 **Dark Horse** KATY PERRY
4 **Shake It Off** TAYLOR SWIFT
5 **Anaconda** NICKI MINAJ
6 **Problem** ARIANA GRANDE
7 **Chandelier** SIA
8 **Rich Gang** LIFESTYLE
9 **Loyal** CHRIS BROWN
10 **Stay With Me** SAM SMITH

SOURCE: VEVO



◀ Iggy Azalea and Charli XCX's Clueless homage has more than 395M views on YouTube.

TOP REBLOGGED LIVE-ACTION TV SHOWS
THROUGH DEC. 3

1 **Supernatural** CW
2 **Sherlock** BBC AMERICA
3 **Teen Wolf** MTV
4 **Doctor Who** BBC AMERICA
5 **American Horror Story** FX
6 **Game of Thrones** HBO
7 **Orange Is the New Black** NETFLIX
8 **The 2014 Oscars** ABC
9 **Once Upon a Time** ABC
10 **Hannibal** NBC

SOURCE: TUMBLR

▲ Tumblr users reblogged Supernatural content more than 113M times.

TOP PAID IPHONE APPS
THROUGH DEC. 8

1 **Heads Up!**
2 **Minecraft: Pocket Edition**
3 **Afterlight**
4 **Plague Inc.**
5 **Sleep Cycle**
6 **Facetune**
7 **Cut the Rope 2**
8 **Bloons TD 5**
9 **A Dark Room**
10 **7 Minute Workout Challenge**

SOURCE: ITUNES

THIS YEAR IN LOCAL

TOP BOOKS AT PARNASSUS BOOKS
Nashville
THROUGH DEC. 15

1 **This Is the Story of a Happy Marriage** ANN PATCHETT
2 **Heritage** SEAN BROCK
3 **David and Goliath** MALCOLM GLADWELL
4 **Strong Inside: Perry Wallace and the Collision of Race and Sports in the South** ANDREW MARANISS
5 **The Invention of Wings** SUE MONK KIDD
6 **Redeployment** PHIL KLAY
7 **Cooked: A Natural History of Transformation** MICHAEL POLLAN
8 **Lila** MARILYNNE ROBINSON
9 **Station Eleven** EMILY ST. JOHN MANDEL
10 **Deep Down Dark** HÉCTOR TOBAR

SOURCE: PARNASSUS BOOKS

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY: © MARVEL 2014; *THE HUNGER GAMES: MOCKINGJAY—PART 1*: MURRAY CLOSE; WILLIAMS: CHELSEA LAUREN/WIREIMAGE.COM; AZALEA: C FLANIGAN/GETTY IMAGES; *SUPERNATURAL*: LIANE HENTSCHER/THE CW

BINGE!

Agatha Christie

BEHIND THAT DOUGHTY, MATRONLY VISAGE LURKED A BRAIN CONSUMED WITH, WELL, MURDER. A REREADING OF CHRISTIE'S 66 DETECTIVE NOVELS REVEALS THAT ALMOST ALL STAND THE TEST OF TIME. **By Tina Jordan**

Agatha Christie in 1950

POPPERFOTO/GETTY IMAGES

BORN IN 1890, Agatha Mary Clarissa Miller seemed destined for an ordinary middle-class British life. But after working at an apothecary during WWI—where she developed a keen interest in poison—and enduring an unhappy first marriage, she launched one of the most spectacular literary careers of the 20th century, selling more than 2 billion copies and reinventing the modern mystery with sharp, baleful, red-herring-strewn plots. She divorced her first husband—though not before what some say was staging her own disappearance in order to embarrass him—and found happiness with her second, an archaeologist. When she died in 1976 at age 85, she had finished 72 novels, 160 short stories, and 15 stage plays, including the world's longest-running one, *The Mousetrap*.

BINGE!

Agatha Christie

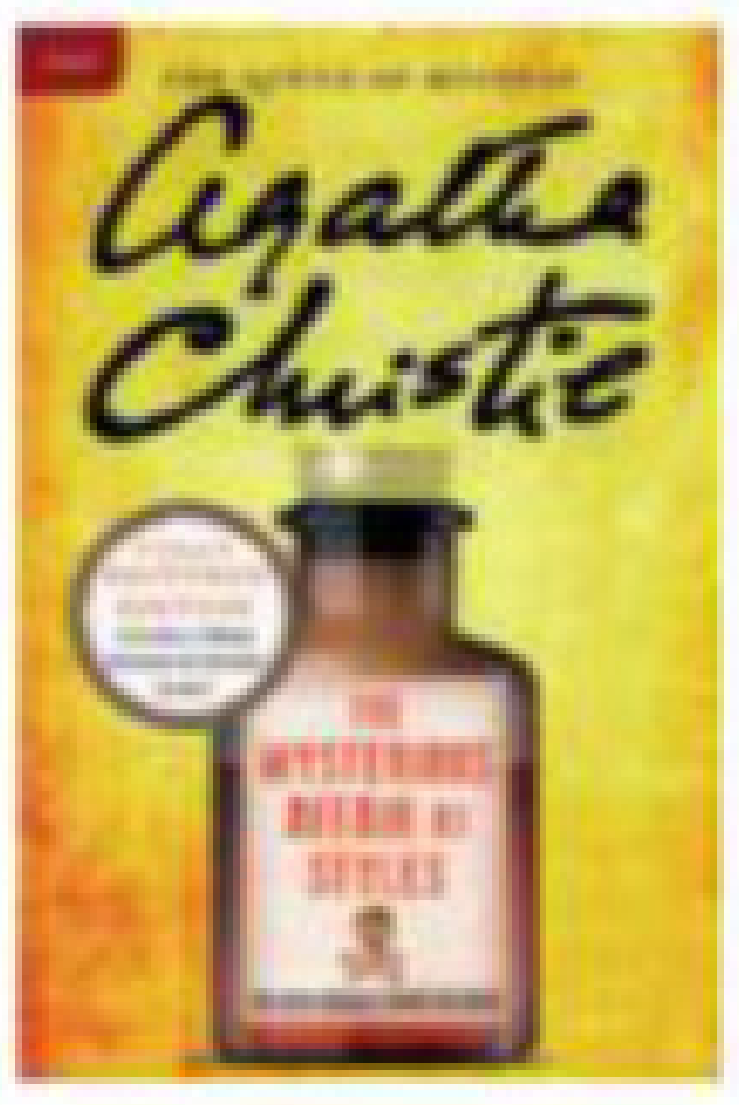
A FEW OF HER FAVORITE THINGS

Christie's fascinations—everything from jewels to trains—show up in her fiction time and again

Archaeology 4 BOOKS	Jewels 5 BOOKS
Clocks and/or watches 3 BOOKS	Nursery rhymes 6 BOOKS
Trains 5 BOOKS	Foreign travel 9 BOOKS

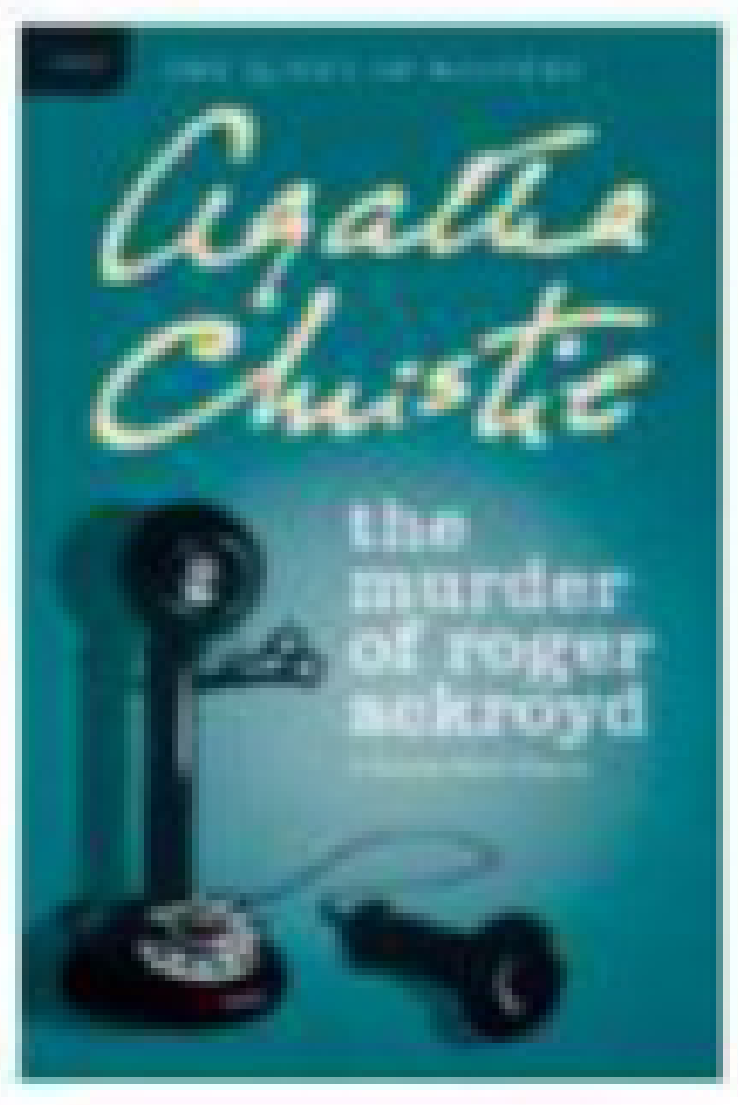
NINE GREAT CHRISTIE NOVELS

Here are our favorites—and some of Christie's, too



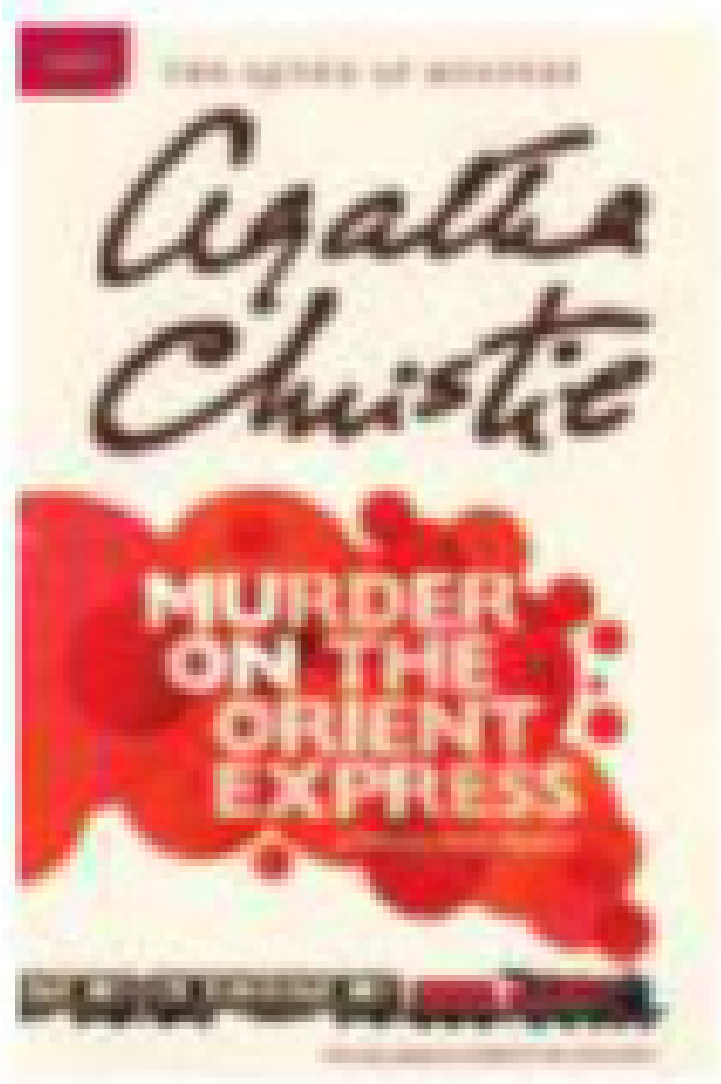
The Mysterious Affair at Styles
1920
Christie enjoyed setting mysteries at lavish country estates, and this one—involving the strychnine poisoning of the lady of the manor—is one of her finest.

EW favorite



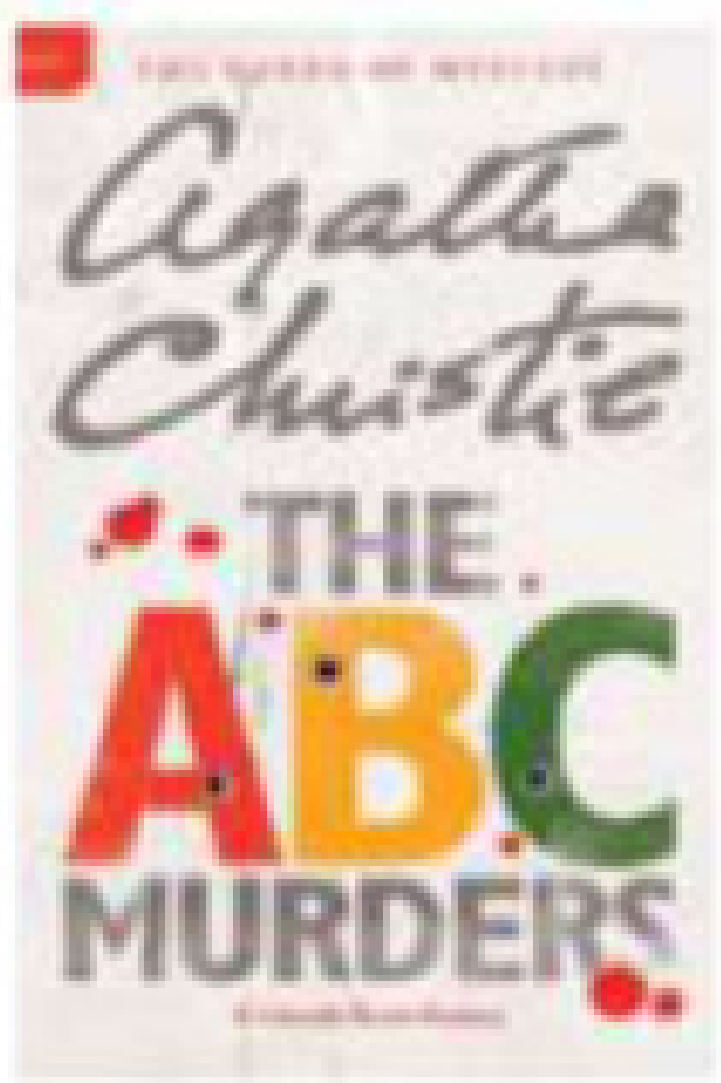
The Murder of Roger Ackroyd
1926
Can evil really be lurking beneath the quaint thatched roofs of King's Abbott? Yes, as the local doctor, who narrates, finds out. Some love Christie's most famous twist ending; others loathe it.

EW and Christie favorite



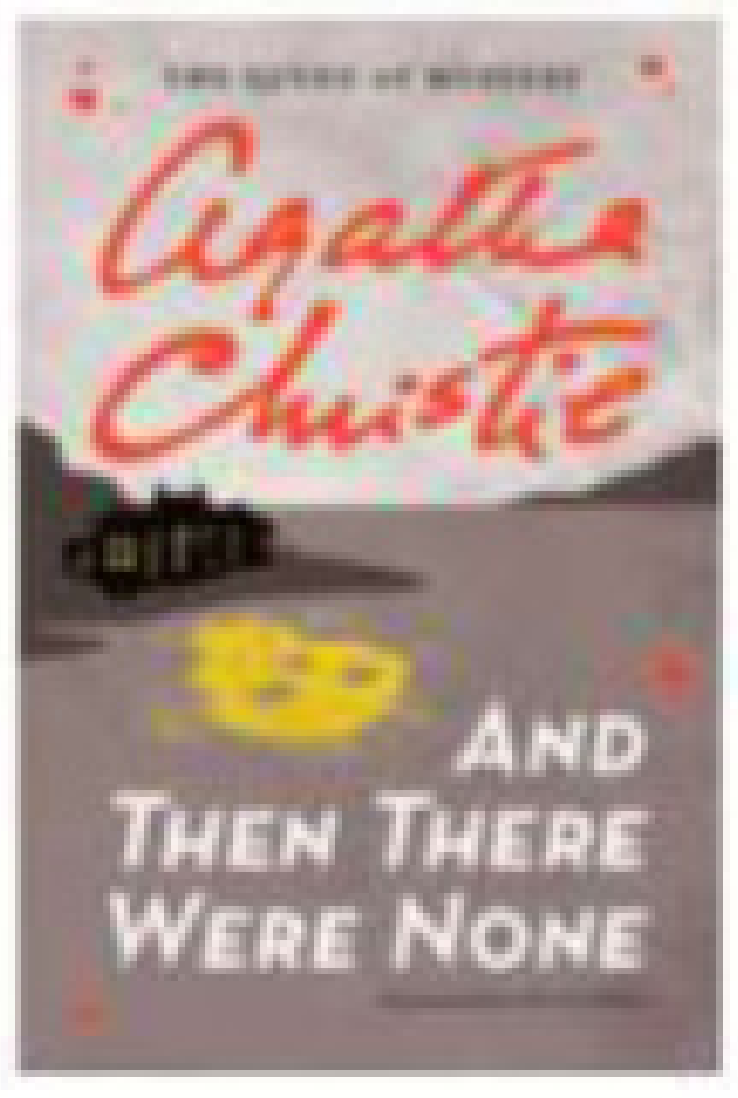
Murder on the Orient Express
1934
While the opulent Istanbul-to-Paris Orient Express is stranded in a snowdrift in Yugoslavia, an odious American passenger is stabbed to death. As Hercule Poirot discovers, everyone in the train car had reason to wish him dead.

EW favorite



The ABC Murders
1936
A murderer calling himself ABC sends cryptic notes to Poirot with clues about his next victims—then proceeds to kill said victims in alphabetical order.

EW favorite



And Then There Were None
1939
In the novel widely regarded as Christie's masterpiece, 10 people are lured to an uninhabited island off the Devon coast and killed one by one. There's no detective here—the murderer confesses in the final chapter.

EW favorite

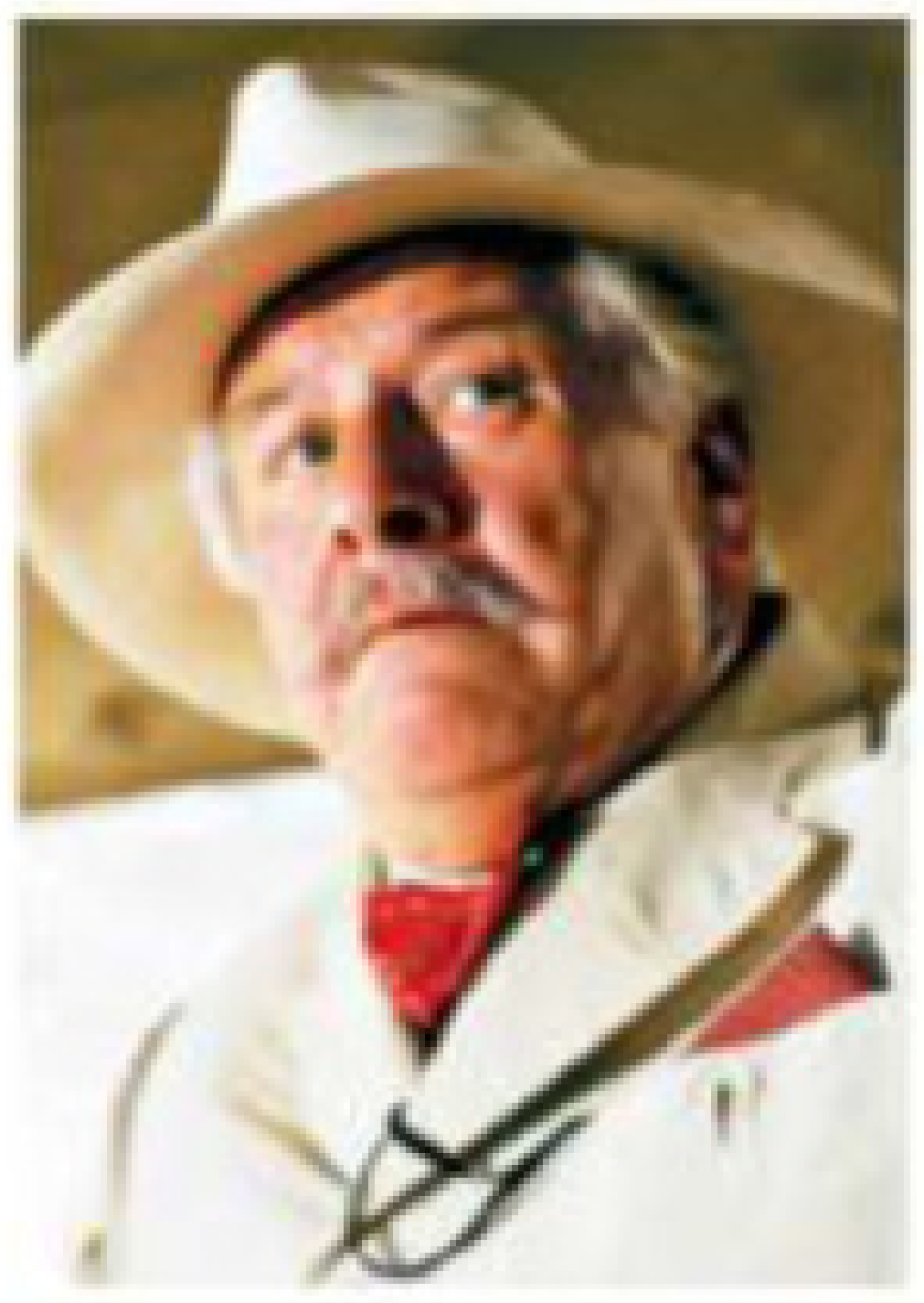
HERCULE POIROT & MISS MARPLE

Christie's two most famous literary detectives as they were portrayed in the movies and on TV over the

AUSTIN TREVOR
Alibi
(1931)

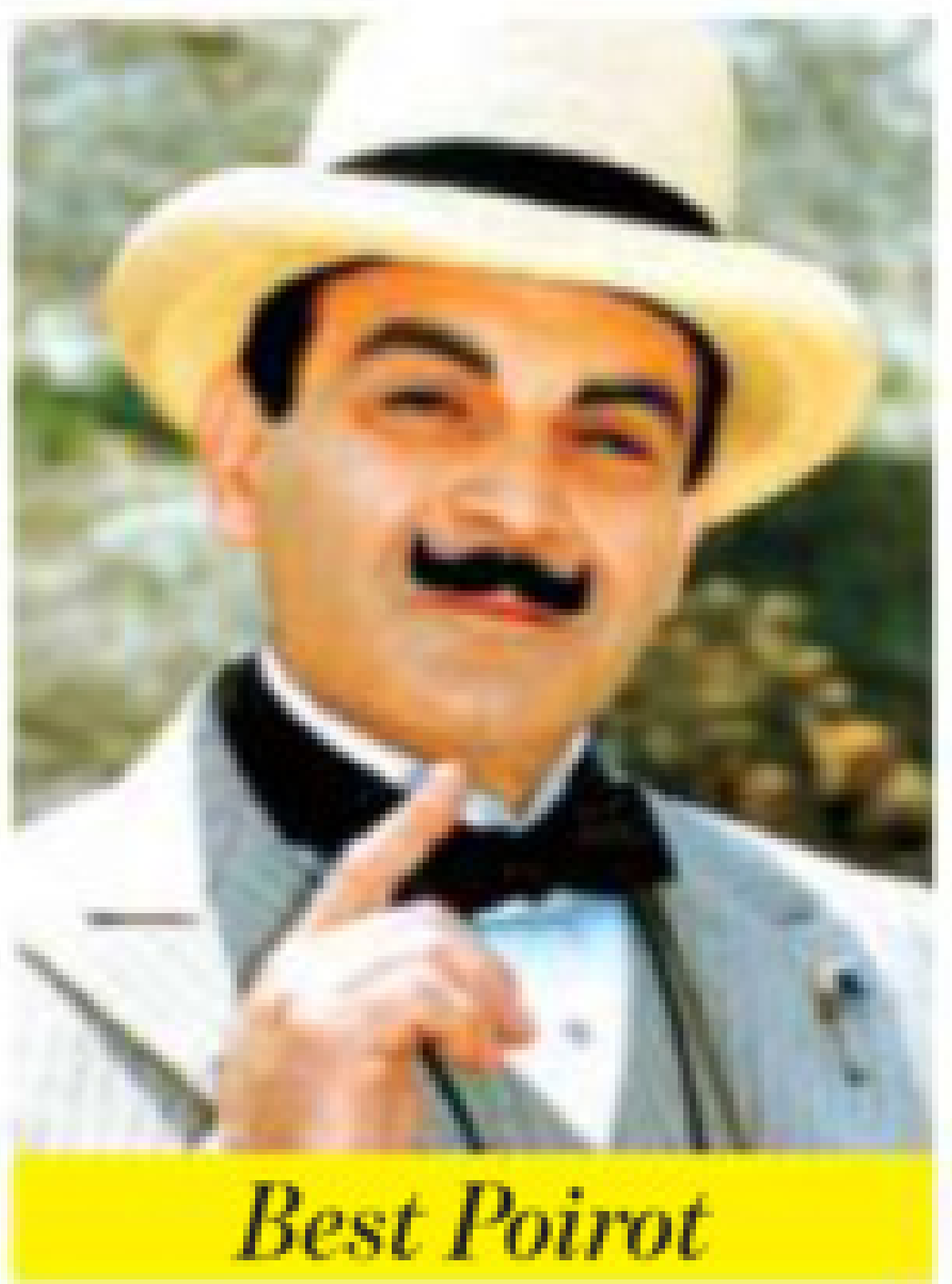
TONY RANDALL
The Alphabet Murders
(1965)

ALBERT FINNEY
Murder on the Orient Express
(1974)



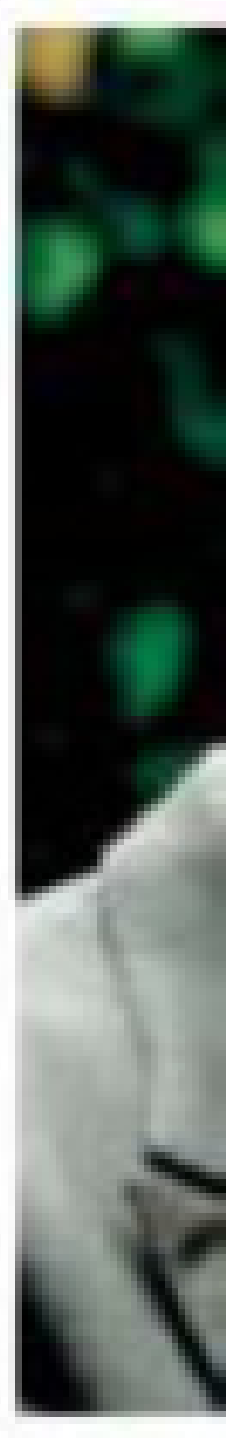
SIR PETER USTINOV
Death on the Nile
(1978)

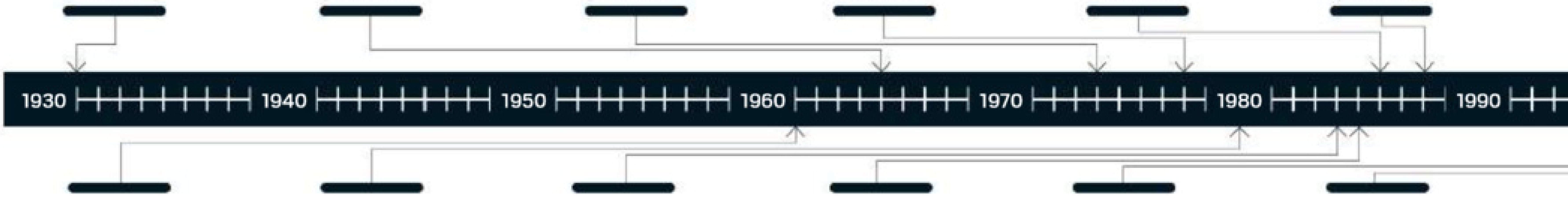
IAN HOLM
Murder by the Book
(1986)



Best Poirot

DAVID SUCHET
Poirot
(ITV, 1988)





MARGARET RUTHERFORD
Murder She Said...
(1961)

ANGELA LANSBURY
The Mirror Crack'd
(1980)

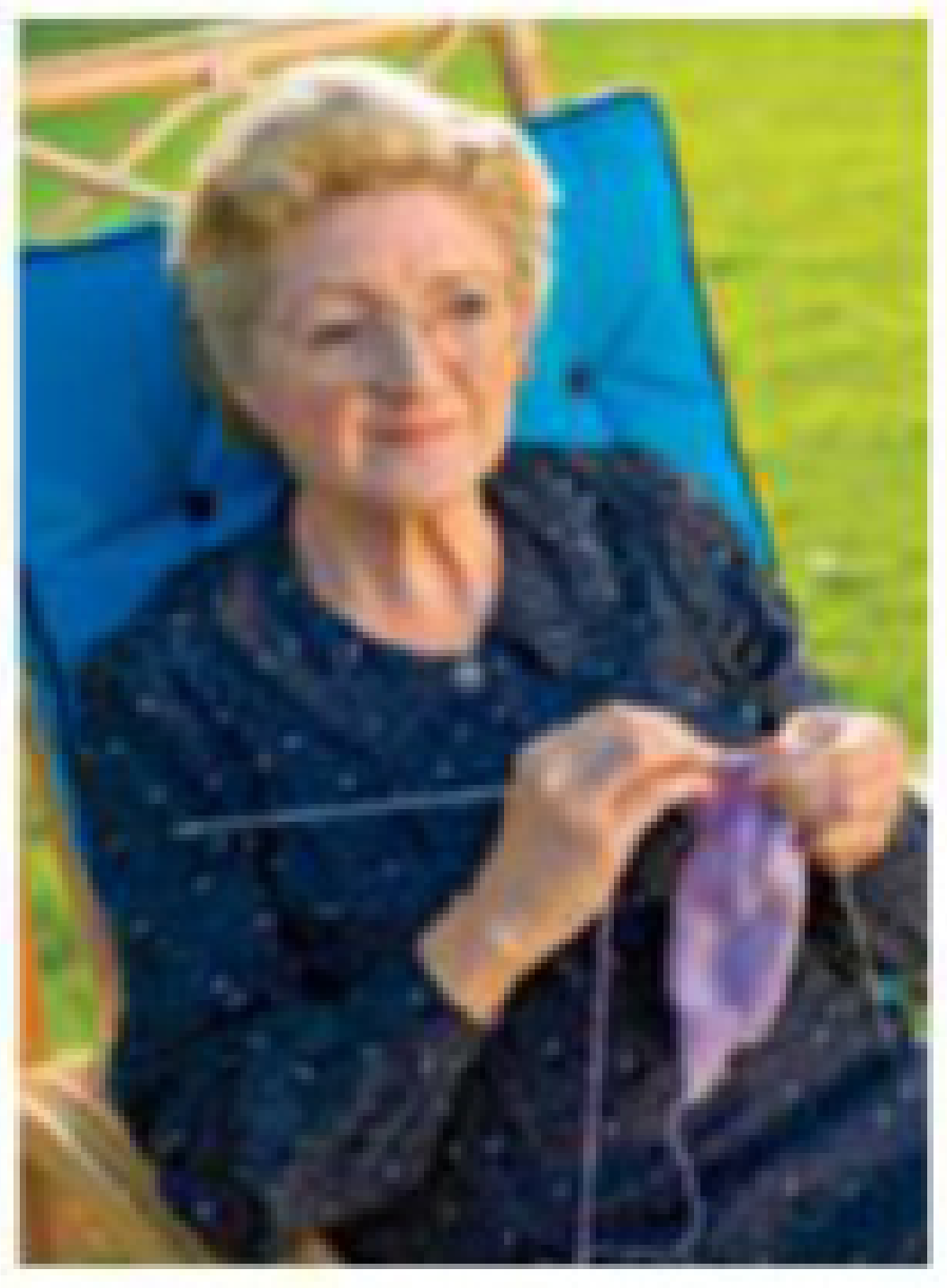
JOAN HICKSON
Miss Marple
(BBC, 1984)

Best Marple

HELEN HAYES
Murder With Mirrors
(1985)

GERALDINE McEWAN
Marple
(ITV, 2004–07)

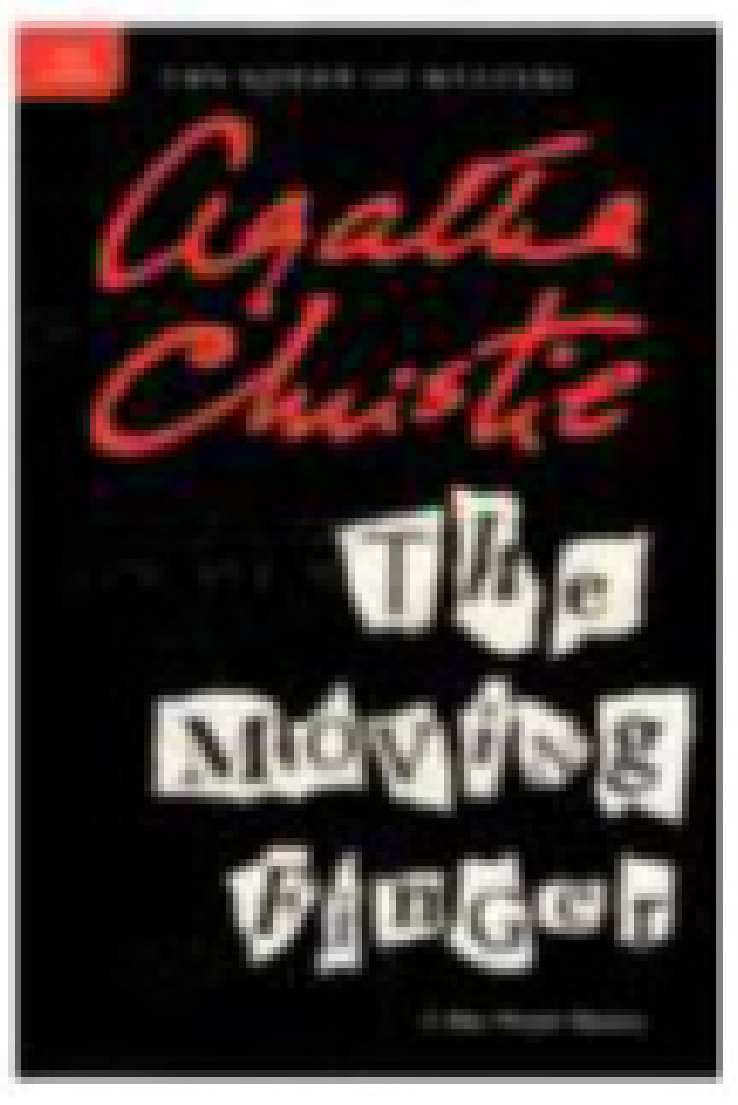
JULIA McKENZIE
Marple
(ITV/Acorn, 2009–13)



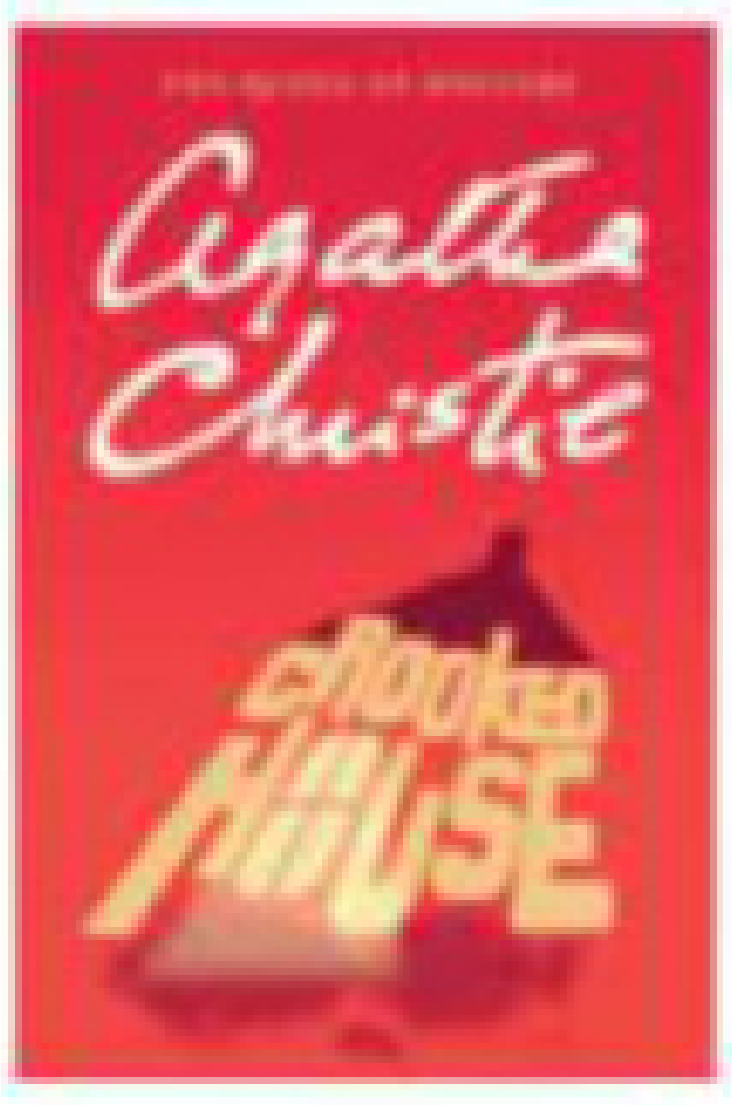
CHRISTIE: HULTON-DEUTSCH COLLECTION/CORBIS; TREVOR: MONDADORI PORTFOLIO/EVERETT COLLECTION; RANDALL, FINNEY, RUTHERFORD: EVERETT COLLECTION (3); USTINOV: CANNON FILMS/EVERETT COLLECTION; HOLM: A&E/EVERETT COLLECTION; SUCHET, HICKSON: MIRRORPIX/EVERETT COLLECTION (2); LANSBURY: ASSOCIATED FILM DISTRIBUTION/EVERETT COLLECTION; HAYES: WARNER BROS. TELEVISION/EVERETT COLLECTION; MCEWAN: GRANADA MEDIA/EVERETT COLLECTION; MCKENZIE: PATRICK REDMOND/ITV FOR *MASTERPIECE*/PBS/EVERETT COLLECTION

Hercule Poirot Is Dead; Famed Belgian Detective

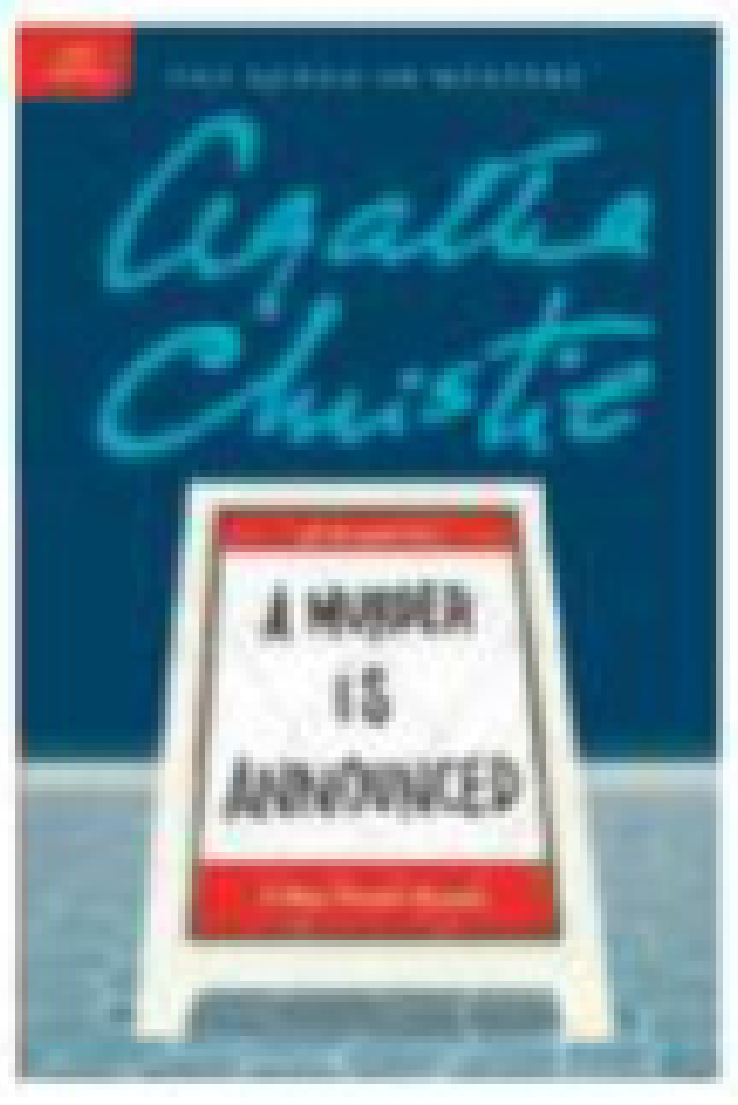
When Christie killed off the beloved sleuth in Curtain *(written in the 1940s but held in the vault until 1975),* The New York Times *ran a front-page obit.*



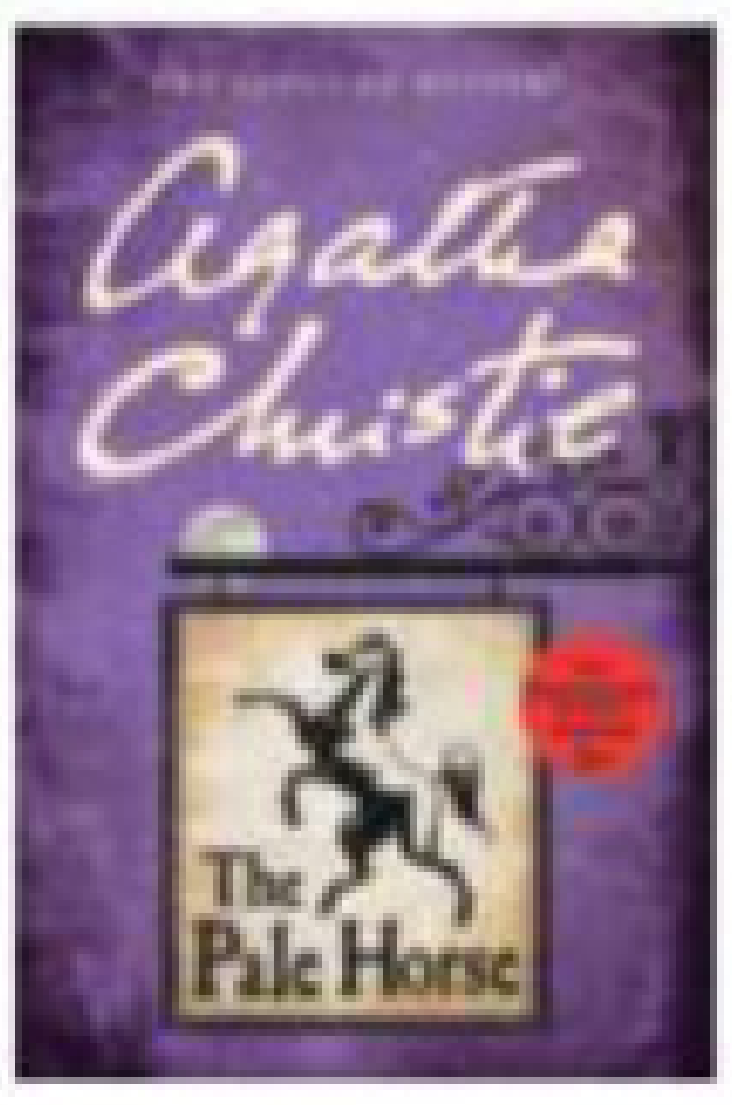
The Moving Finger
1942
Anonymous hate letters rattle a cozy British village, pitting residents against one another. And then the recipients begin to die.
Christie favorite



Crooked House
1948
There are plenty of people who had a motive to kill the lord and master of Crooked House, but the murderer, when finally revealed, isn't one of them.
EW favorite

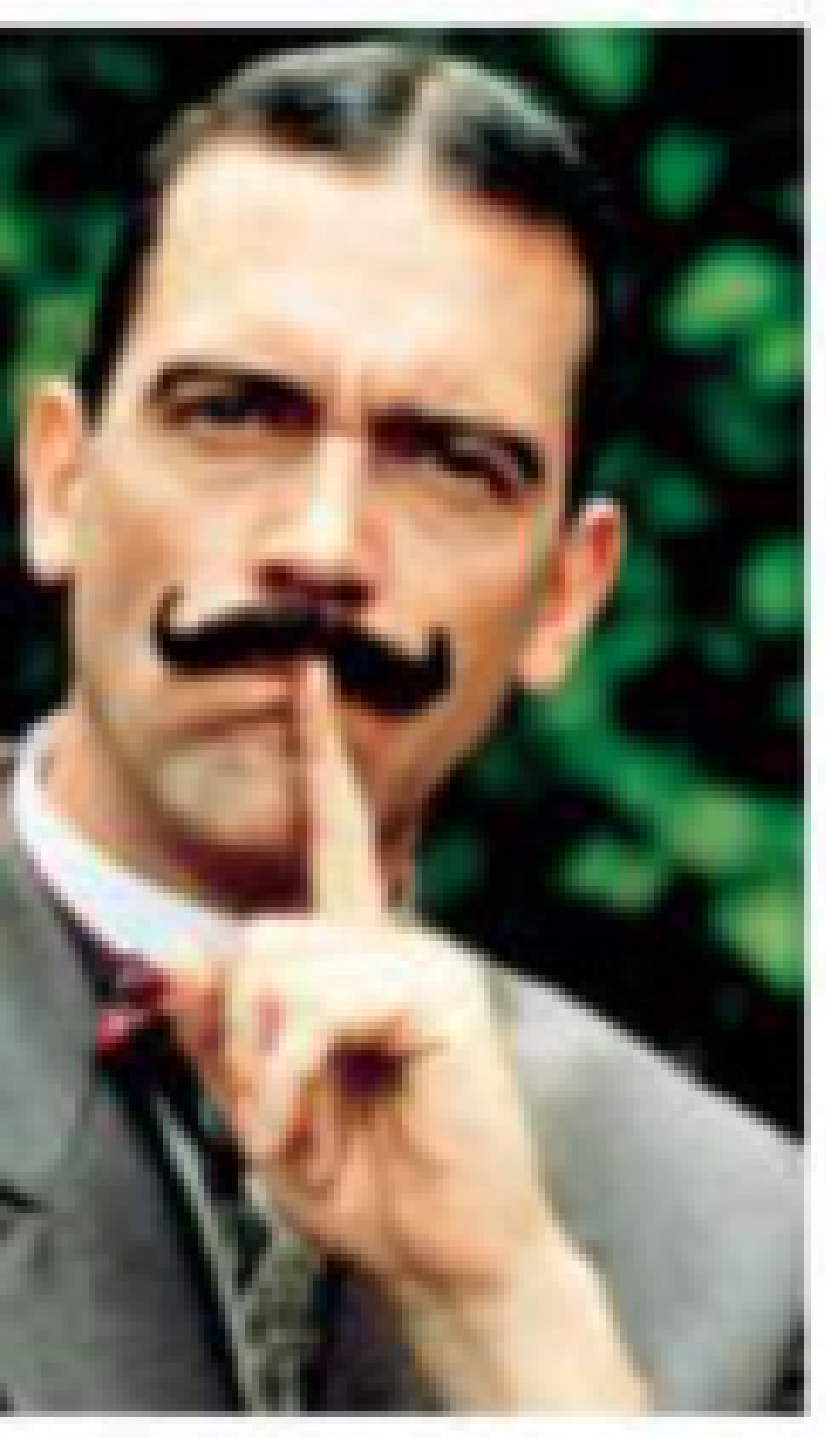


A Murder Is Announced
1950
The picture-perfect hamlet of Chipping Cleghorn buzzes with gossip when a forthcoming homicide is advertised in the local newspaper, but the excitement turns to horror when it turns out to be true.
EW favorite

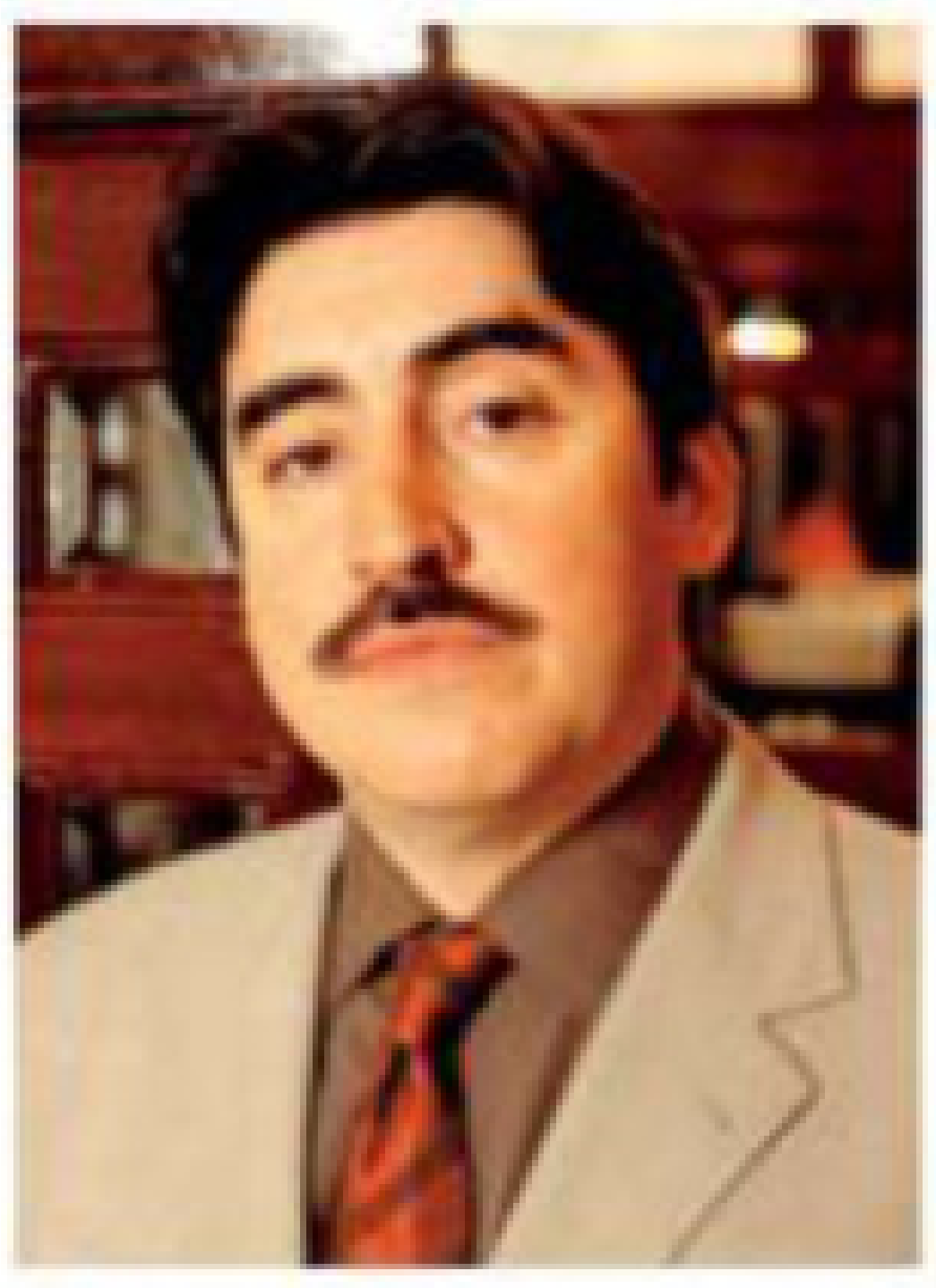


The Pale Horse
1961
An excellent brew of homicide and black magic starring three elderly women, all rumored to be witches, who live in a former inn called the Pale Horse.
EW favorite

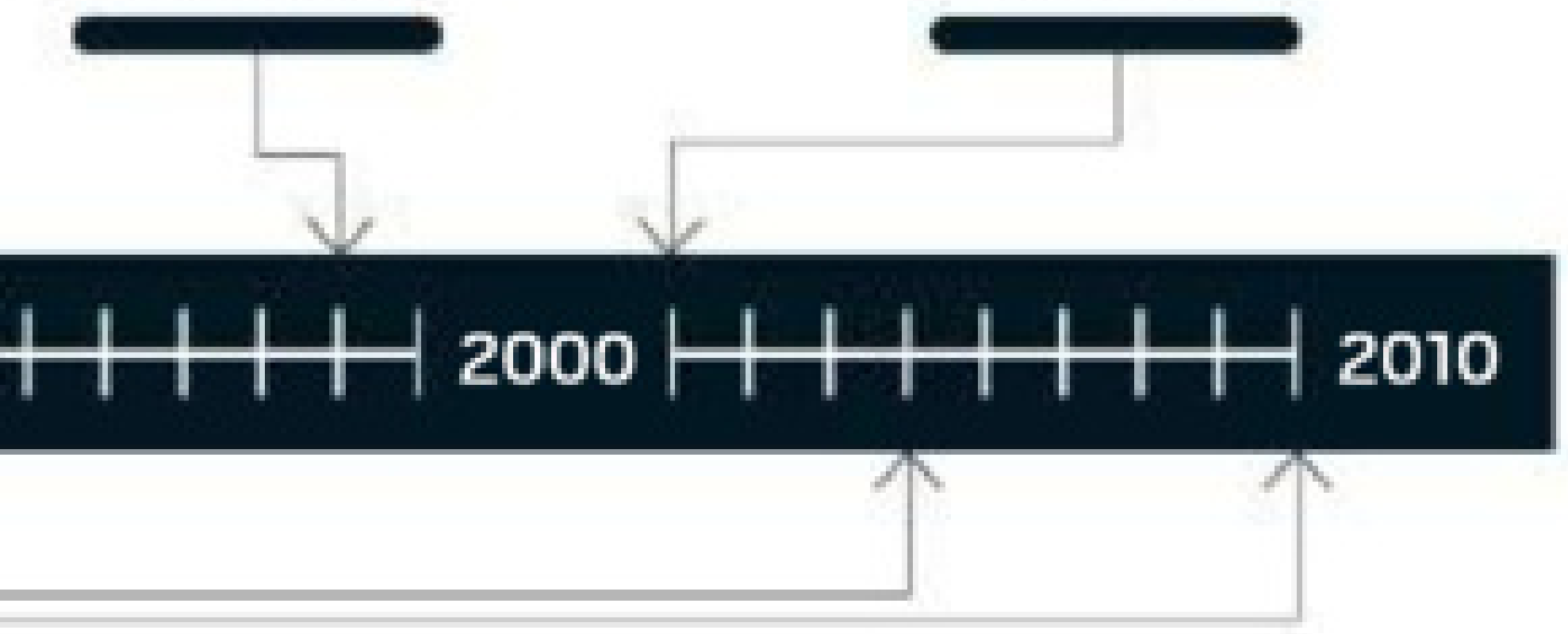
years



HUGH LAURIE
Spice World
(1998)



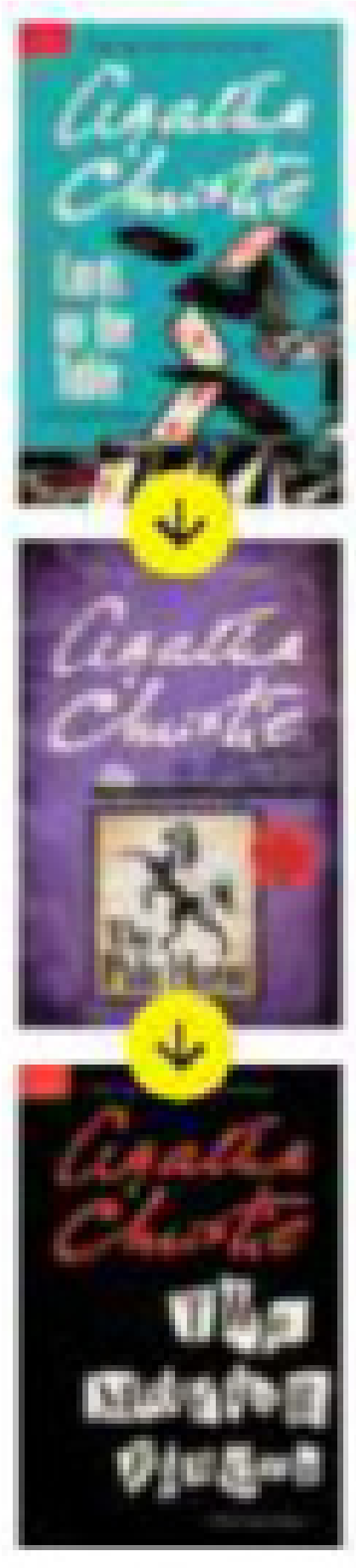
ALFRED MOLINA
Murder on the Orient Express
(2001)



DEGREES OF SEPARATION

Poirot and Miss Marple never met (though they both know the mysterious Mr. Robinson), but...

- **Poirot** worked with mystery writer **Ariadne Oliver** in six novels, beginning with *Cards on the Table*
- Mrs. Oliver met **the Reverend & Mrs. Calthorp** in *The Pale Horse*
- The Calthorps are friends of **Miss Marple**, as we see in *The Moving Finger*



CHRISTIE'S WACKIEST MURDER DEVICES

Electrified chessboard
The Big Four

Box of chocolates
Three Act Tragedy

Ornamental pineapple
Murder Is Easy

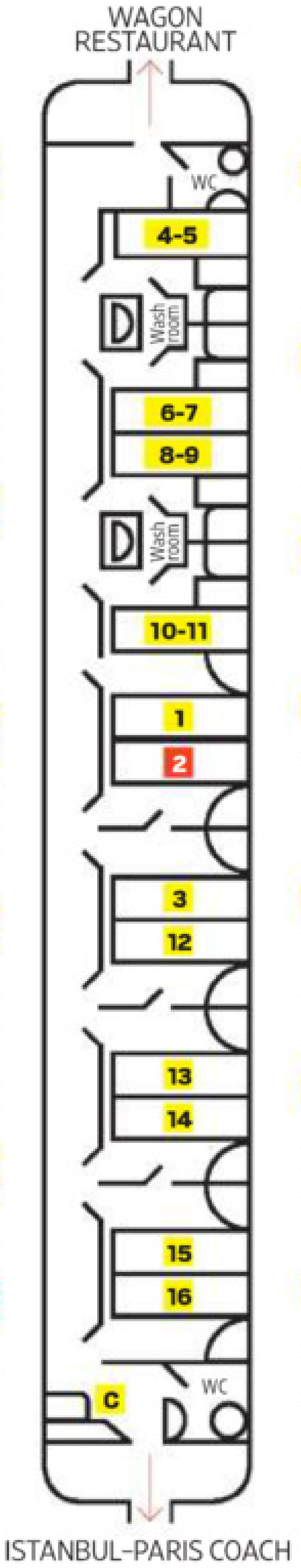
Morphine hidden in a sandwich
Sad Cypress

Apple-bobbing tub at a Halloween party
Hallowe'en Party

Poisoned glass of champagne
Sparkling Cyanide

TRAINING FOR MURDER

In *Murder on the Orient Express*, Poirot learns that every single person in the train car had reason to kill Ratchett, who turns out to be the infamous murderer of 3-year-old heiress Daisy Armstrong.



4-5
Masterman
valet to Colonel Armstrong (Daisy's dad)

Foscarelli
Colonel Armstrong's former chauffeur

6-7
Hector MacQueen
father was the district attorney who prosecuted Ratchett

8-9
Hildegarde Schmidt
Armstrong family cook

10-11
Greta Ohlsson
Daisy's nurse

Mary Debenham
Armstrong family governess

1
Hercule Poirot
detective

2
Ratchett
the murder victim

3
Mrs. Hubbard
mother of Sonia Armstrong (Daisy's mom)

12
Countess Andrenyi
Sonia Armstrong's younger sister

13
Count Andrenyi
the Countess' husband

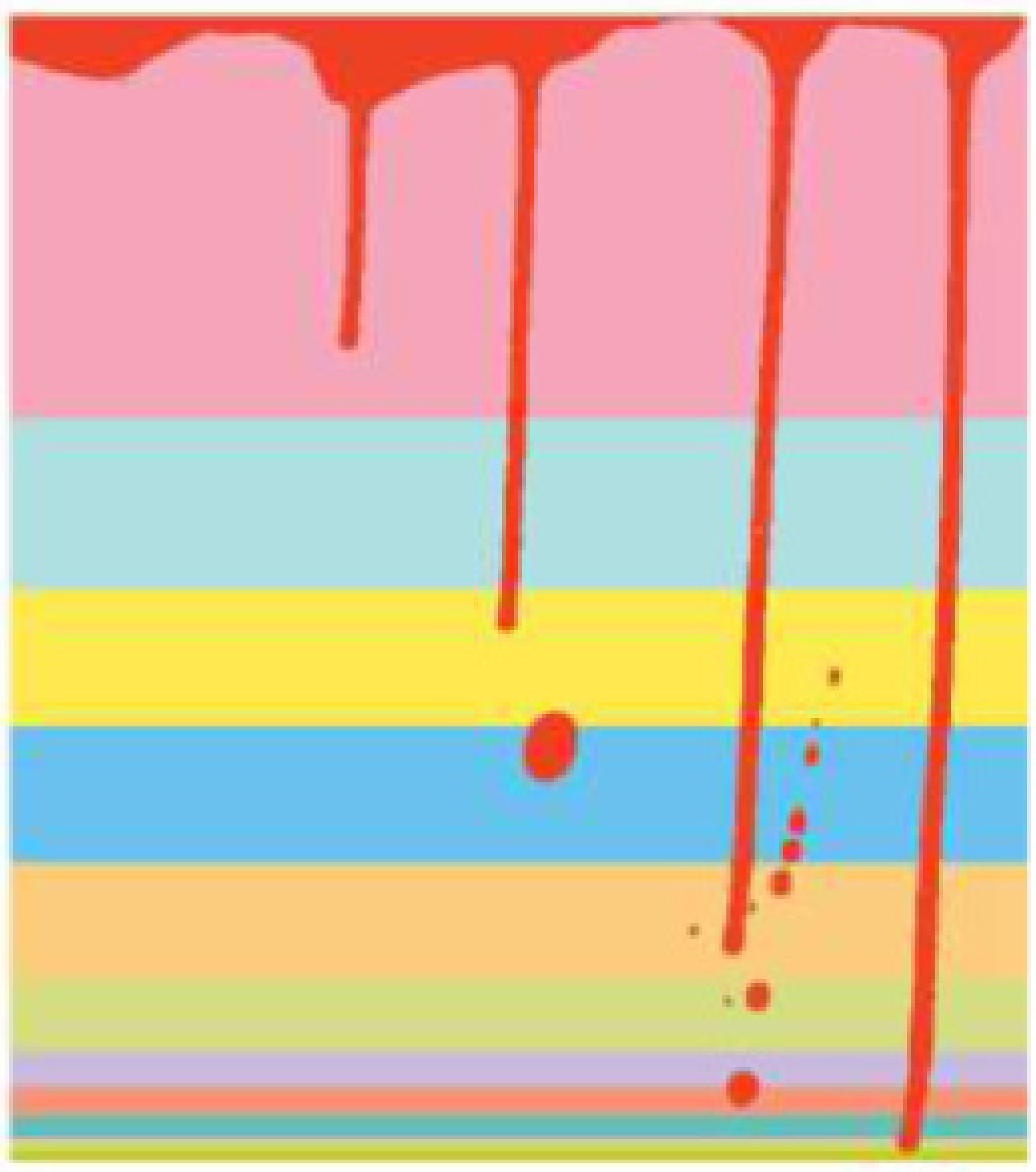
14
Princess Dragomiroff
Sonia Armstrong's godmother

15
Colonel Arbuthnot
Colonel Armstrong's best friend

16
Hardman
private detective who tracked Ratchett down

C
Pierre Michel
train conductor and father of Daisy's nanny

HOW CHRISTIE LIKED TO KILL



- Poisoned **35%**
- Shot **15%**
- Bludgeoned **12%**
- Stabbed **12%**
- Strangled **10%**
- Pushed off something **6.5%**
- Drowned **3%**
- Sandbagged **2.5%**
- Unclear **2%**
- Hit-and-run **1%**
- Hanged **1%**
- Blood

OBITUARY: FROM *THE NEW YORK TIMES*, AUGUST 6 © 1975 *THE NEW YORK TIMES*. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.; LAURIE: COLUMBIA PICTURES/EVERETT COLLECTION; MOLINA: CBS/GETTY IMAGES

The first in a series of deep dives into pop culture anthropology

NCL
NORWEGIAN PEARL
NORWEGIAN PEARL
OBEY AND THE POSSE

GOING OVERBOARD

Three ports of call, 1,200 gallons of Fireball,* 21 DJs, 2,700 EDM fans, and one wild cruise director named Diplo. EW takes to the high seas with the Mad Decent Boat Party.

BY MILES RAYMER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY SHANE McCAULEY

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*Our estimate

(From left) Boat Partyers en route to the beach rave; Major Lazer's Jillionaire surfs the crowd

THE CRUISE INDUSTRY has worked hard to shed its senior-citizens-and-shuffleboard image over the past few years, launching pop-culture-themed cruises aimed at a younger crowd. But even with boats helmed by heavy metal bands, country singers, and, of all people, Paula Deen, the Mad Decent Boat Party floats alone. Hosted in November by DJ/producer Diplo—an in-demand beatmaker for the likes of Beyoncé, Usher, and Madonna, and a dance-culture icon in his own right—Mad Decent offered 90 hours of music, possible mind-altering substances, and one very enthusiastic guy in a pizza romper. Grab your life preserver.

WEDNESDAY

2:52 p.m. We're not even on the boat yet and there's already a rave happening. A prerecorded DJ mix is booming from our Port of Miami terminal, and attendees in the check-in line—many costumed in animal masks and Power Ranger-like Morphsuits—are dancing. There is a lot of whooping. And a lot of Instagramming.

6:24 p.m. Apparently not content with the DJs spinning upstairs, multiple rooms are booming with their own EDM mixes. The ship's 11 bars are doing brisk business in Fireball (a kind of cinnamon-flavored whiskey) and beer buckets. Despite rigorous customs inspections and a "no tolerance" drug policy printed in hot pink in the guidebook, more than a couple of cruisers' pupils appear well dilated. (Also in the guidebook: "If you need medical help, just ask! No one will be mad at you.")

11:48 p.m. Thursday and Friday nights have costume themes ("Animal Style" and "Suit and Tie & Ladies Night"), but this crowd doesn't need prompting to dress up. Predictably, there are a lot of pirates, as well as elaborate homemade outfits, like the group wearing coveralls outlined in LED

"I'm the king of the world!"

lights. A sprinkling of rain during Diplo's first set feels like a benediction, and the blessed crowd just dances harder.

1:22 a.m. There's a genuine—if extremely unconventional—bond forming among the ship's 2,700 passengers. Ravers are an intensely social folk, and the Mad Decent crew are vocal (and effective) promoters of the old-school rave philosophy of PLUR, an acronym for "peace, love, unity, and respect." You can't ride an elevator without making new friends (usually via an a cappella sing-along of the "Goin' up on a Tuesday" refrain from the Atlanta rapper ILoveMakonnen's oddball hit "Tuesday"). Boat Partyers grind on each other amicably, not only on the ship's dance floors but in its hallways and buffet lines.

4:03 a.m. Diplo is backstage during a set by Toronto duo Zeds Dead, and as usual he's surrounded by adoring, minimally clothed women. He steps away to tap at his phone, distractedly caressing the leg of his very expensive-looking sweatpants.

4:48 a.m. Arena-rave-meets-jam-band outfit Big Gigantic hit the stage. No one is headed for bed.

THURSDAY

11 a.m. A female voice politely announces over the PA, "Just a reminder, clothing is required in the dining areas."

3:55 p.m. On my way to the midship atrium, I am wrangled into a photo with a group of strangers who talk to me as if we've known each other for years.

6:17 p.m. Pretty much every DJ set on board seems to include Kanye, and the most popular track of the week is, curiously, Ludacris' 2002 crunk hit "Move Bitch." During back-to-back sets by producer Lunice and rapper Travi$ Scott, ILoveMakonnen appears in the crowd for a moment but vanishes when sighted, like a unicorn.

9:33 p.m. DJ Snake begins a set that the dance floor hopes will be a continuous hour-long remix of his inescapable summer anthem "Turn Down for What."

● **11:18 p.m.** During a performance by Major Lazer, Makonnen reemerges, alongside enigmatic rapper Riff Raff—famously an inspiration for James Franco's character in *Spring Breakers*—to roars of approval. Despite the general outrageousness of the scene, the vibe between the artists on board is surprisingly collaborative, not unlike a folk hootenanny or jazz jam.

FRIDAY

12:07 p.m. The boat docks in Nassau, Bahamas, for the day, and life on dry land is awkward and drab. Many reboard quickly, happy to be back where underwear counts as an outfit and the thumping soundtrack never stops.

11 a.m. A female voice politely announces over the PA, "Just a reminder, clothing is required in the dining areas."

● THURSDAY 11:18p.m.

Diplo and friends

2:32 p.m. At this point in the cruise most people have been dancing and partying for 48 straight hours. The new elevator conversation: "Have you slept yet?" My quads burn like I've done a hundred squats.

● **5:13 p.m.** A couple from Charleston, S.C., get married on the sundeck. The officiant: a guy the couple met through the cruise's Facebook page. The witness: a guy holding a homemade sign that reads "TURN UP THE BASS," with a large inflatable fish standing in for the last word.

7:03 p.m. The ship wakes from a nap-time lull when the PA crackles, announcing the imminent surprise presence of superstar DJ Skrillex. The glee that erupts is like a bunch of kids just realized it's Christmas morning.

7:45 p.m. The pool-deck performance with Skrillex and Diplo begins, but there's no sea of smartphones held aloft to capture the moment. Wi-Fi on board is obscenely expensive, and its absence makes the trip feel almost like time travel back to pre-iPhone days.

12:26 a.m. The bride and groom are now walking around in underwear and suspenders. They attract a steady stream of congratulations, which jibes with the sense of small-town conviviality. The ship we're on hosted a cruise built around Florida Georgia Line right before us, and the crew tells me that the ravers,

DJ Bro Safari hosts a belly-flop contest

FRIDAY 5:13p.m.

wild as they are, are significantly better-behaved than the country-music fans.

3:37 a.m. We're now on Vegas time. The crowd's energy shows no sign of flagging, even though we're cut off from the outside world, perpetually sleep-deprived, and constantly exposed to repetitive music, which is not unlike how cults work. It occurs to me that if Diplo started a cult, it might be worth joining.

SATURDAY

1 p.m. Norwegian Cruise Line owns a small island in the Bahamas called Great Stirrup Cay, and today it's the setting for a beach rave. The normally turnt-up duo Flosstradamus play a chill set while Boat Partyers—powering through on a combination of sheer willpower and Fireball shots—dance, lounge, and drift in bath-temperature waters. It's the hedonistic peak of a week devoted to pleasure, and through the blurry filter of exhaustion, sun exposure, and piña coladas, the whole scene feels blissfully primitive. If our Pleistocene-epoch ancestors showed up, even they'd get what's going on.

3:18 p.m. Makonnen, wearing yellow goggles and floating up to his shoulders in turquoise water while a Major Lazer track thunders behind him, takes a handful of the Caribbean Sea and pours it over himself. "I get it," he exclaims with delight. "I figured out the secret of life!" When someone asks what he's on, he replies, "Everything."

2:46 a.m. Diplo was scheduled to close out the cruise with one final set, but he had to fly home early when word came that his former girlfriend had given birth to their second child, named Lazer Lee Louis Pentz. Word gets around the ship quickly, and people seem more happy for Diplo than upset that he's gone. Instead, Flosstradamus, Skrillex, DJ Snake, and a cast of guests play back-to-back. But if the hundreds of Boat Partyers raving through their visible fatigue are disappointed at all, they're hiding it expertly.

SUNDAY

9:26 a.m. Sometime during the early morning the ship docked in Miami, 88 hours after we left. The after-party didn't start until 4:30 a.m., so a 9 a.m. checkout time seems excessively cruel. Slowly the ship empties out. In the long customs line, endorphin-free people doze on piles of luggage or stare blankly behind sunglasses. Blinking in the relentless morning sun, Boat Partyers hug each other goodbye, pile into airport shuttles, and pull out their phones, finally texting each other pictures. The real world comes crashing in on us with the weight of its responsibilities and the masses who don't understand PLUR. We'll need these photos to hold on to the moment, and to prove this ever even happened. ■

ALSO ON THE LIDO DECK...

If Diplo and pals aren't your crowd, check out these other options for floating pop culture

1 THE KISS KRUISE

Can you still get a sunburn if you're wearing eight layers of face paint? No reason, just wondering. (Oct. 31–Nov. 4)

2 KID ROCK'S CHILLIN' THE MOST CRUISE

The redneck rock star's cruise has sold out for six consecutive years—and returnees get "veteran" tags. (March 2–6)

3 HOLY SHIP!

Hopefully, when Baauer and Skrillex drop the bass at this EDM-fest, the whales won't confuse it for echolocation. (Jan. 3–6, Feb. 18–21)

4 DANCING WITH THE STARS AT SEA

If Carlton Banks dance lessons are on the program, count us in! Otherwise, maybe your aunt wants to go? (2015 TBD)

5 MOTÖRHEAD'S MOTÖRBOAT

This cruise isn't on a motorboat. But imagine how many people would get motorboated if it were. (2015 TBD)

6 STEAMPUNK CRUISE

"Tropical cruise" meets Victorian gowns, top hats, and long-sleeved swimwear. (April 25–May 3)

7 MAYERCRAFT CARRIER

The John Mayer-helmed adventure is "taking some time off," but if this lime green beauty is still in his closet, it should return by popular demand. *—Isabella Biedenharn*

MAYER: SPLASH NEWS

WHERE DO
GREAT MOVIES
AMAZING TV SHOWS AND
MIND-BLOWING MUSIC
COME FROM?

Entertainment WEEKLY
LIGHT
BULB

The most creative minds in entertainment on inspiration,
motivation, and the art of bringing ideas to life.

WATCH IT AT EW.COM/LIGHTBULB

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***Entertainment Weekly** Presents*

2015 PREVIEW

What will this year bring? The end of Don Draper. The return of Adele. New beginnings for *Jurassic Park* and *Mad Max*. Oh, and a little movie about a galaxy far, far away...

MOVIES *page* **40** 🟪

TV *page* **58** 🟩

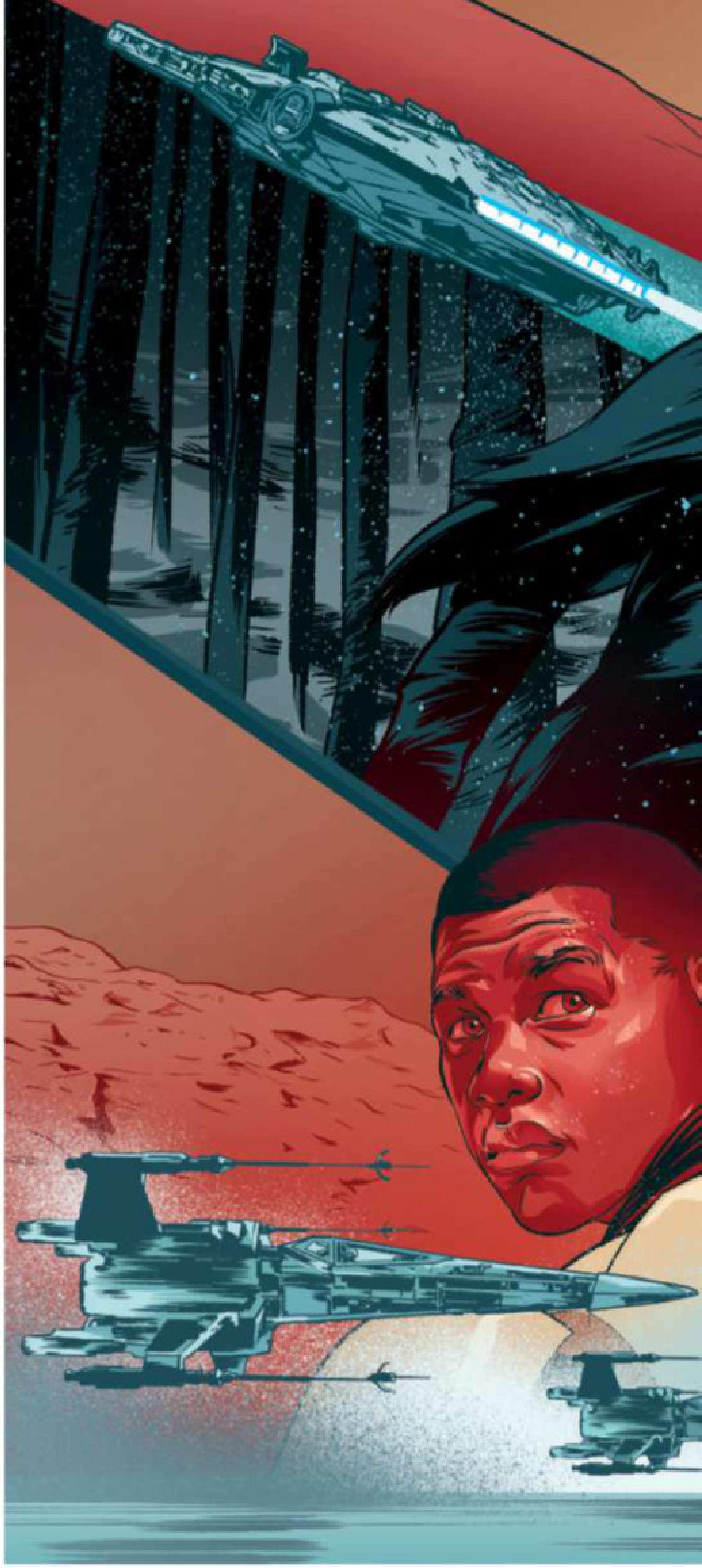
MUSIC *page* **76** 🟦

BOOKS *page* **84** 🟪

2015
PREVIEW

MOVIES

EXCLUSIVE INTEL ON NEXT YEAR'S MOST ANTICIPATED **FILMS**



Star Wars: A New Reason to Hope

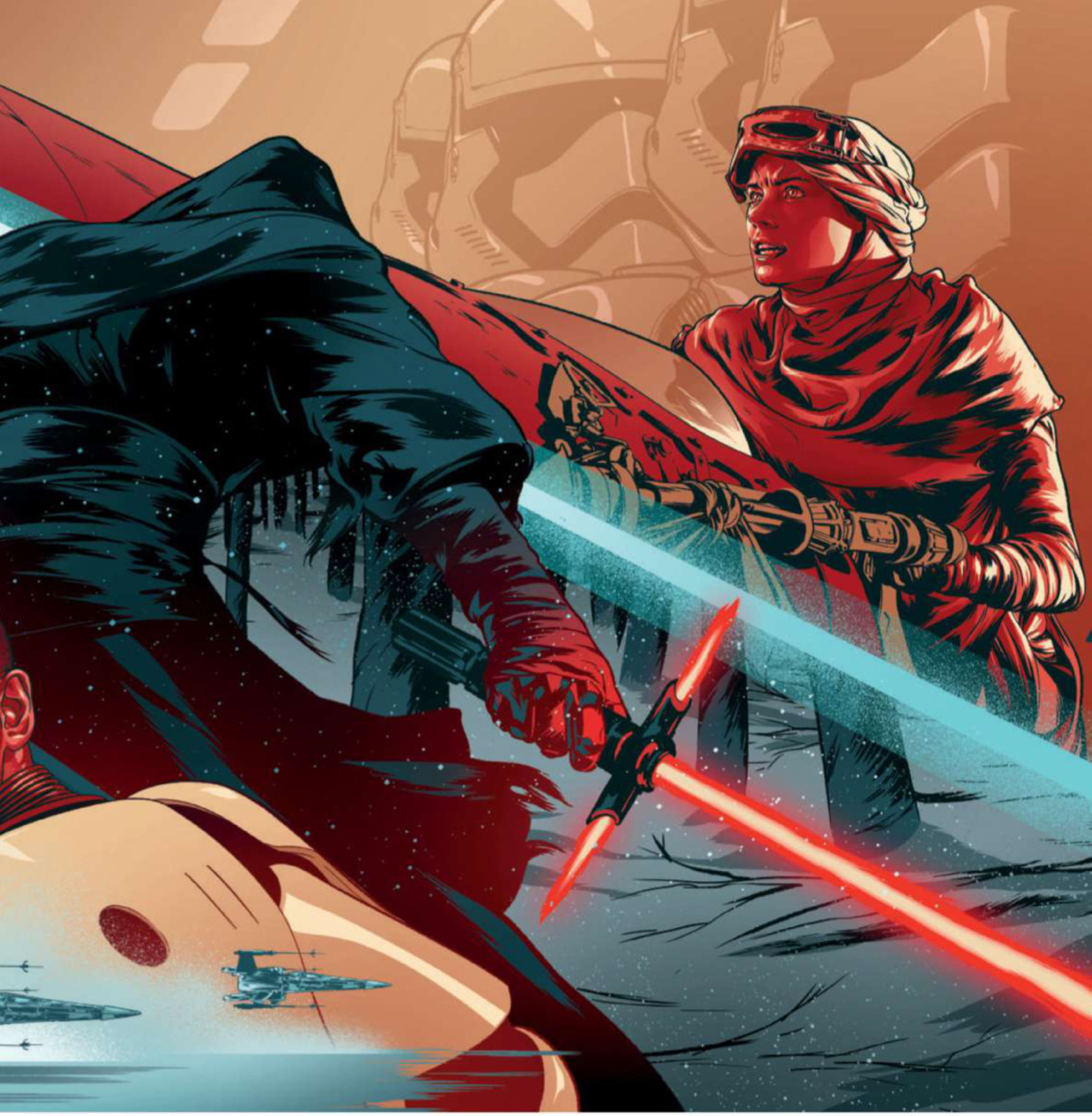
AFTER A YEAR OF RUMORS, THE FIRST TRAILER FOR **STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS** GAVE US ANSWERS...AND SO MANY NEW QUESTIONS. EW DIGS DEEP INTO THE MEANING OF IT ALL.

DEC **18**

MAYBE WE REALLY are alone in the galaxy. The heroes and villains of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* sure seem to be. Although we've only seen flashes of actual footage from next December's journey into that other universe, it's interesting to note that director J.J. Abrams chose to introduce the first new characters in moments of isolation and desperation.

Consider John Boyega as Finn, the scared, sweaty stormtrooper trying to make an escape in the desert. Or Daisy Ridley's Rey, riding solo (no pun intended) in her Taser-shaped speeder across a similarly blighted landscape. Yes, Oscar Isaac's Poe Dameron is flying his X-wing in formation with the rest of his squad, but life in those cockpits can be solitary. These new ships don't even appear to include the R2-D2-style astromech robots the previous models used as co-pilots. Even BB-8, the adorable ball droid, is rolling across the desert on its own.

Then there is Kylo Ren, the



mysterious cloaked figure staggering through the woods on a snowy evening before igniting his fiery three-pronged lightsaber. Clearly a villain and identified in the trailer as standing for "the dark side" in this new awakening, he is possibly the shadow version of Luke Skywalker from the original trilogy—the nobody who rises from nothing and nowhere to topple the powers that be. That would certainly mirror contemporary anxieties: We are less fearful of evil empires; what terrifies us now is the angry loner with a tricked-out weapon.

Without a doubt, at some point these characters will cross paths—or lightsabers. But Abrams and producer Kathleen Kennedy (who took over as president of Lucasfilm after *Star Wars* creator George Lucas sold his kingdom to

Illustration by **MARTIN ANSIN**

Disney in 2012) seem to have tapped into what made the earlier films so powerful. We've all felt alone and powerless, and most of us have been saved from that by friends who join us in a shared quest or destiny. What the new films need—and what the prequels lacked—is the melancholy solitude that makes it so satisfying when forces are ultimately united in the final reel.

"I always think back to the original movies and to those quieter moments where Luke is out in *A New Hope*, and there are the two suns setting, and it's just such a quiet moment," says Adam Driver, another of the newcomers to this galaxy. "It is the equivalent, basically, of a farm boy dying to get out of his small town and do something bigger. It's those kinds of universal themes that ground this whole thing in space." That's the challenge facing this movie: create a big spectacle fused with some measure of intimacy. "I feel like that's everyone's goal, to balance those two," Driver says.

We still don't know who Driver is playing, which also goes for costars (and fellow trailer absentees) Gwendoline Christie, Lupita Nyong'o, Domhnall Gleeson, and Max von Sydow. Andy Serkis (best known as Gollum from *The Lord of the Rings* and Caesar in the new *Planet of the Apes* films) also has an unspecified role, but intones ominously as the narrator of the trailer. He can't reveal much about who (or what) he's playing, explaining only that his character has been hardened by the celestial battles that have raged all these years. "He's been through some stuff," Serkis tells EW. The actor can also knock down some rumors. He does not juggle multiple motion-capture roles, for starters. "I only play one character," he says. "And I'm not leading a band of gymnasts or acrobats." But he thinks you will definitely want to play with his character a year from now. He's eager to be part of a *Star Wars* tradition: becoming an action figure. "I'd better," he says.

BOLD PREDICTION

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1

Star Wars: The Force Awakens *will earn more than $3 billion*

Avatar holds the global box office record of $2.8 billion. But no movie is better poised to reach the $3 billion mark than *Force Awakens*. We predict it will open at $225 million in the U.S., breaking the record set by *The Avengers* in 2012. If the film is great, fans will pay to see it again and again, aided by a global media frenzy. The last time that happened was 1997. That film is now the second-biggest grosser of all time: *Titanic*.

THESE AREN'T THE QUOTES YOU'RE LOOKING FOR

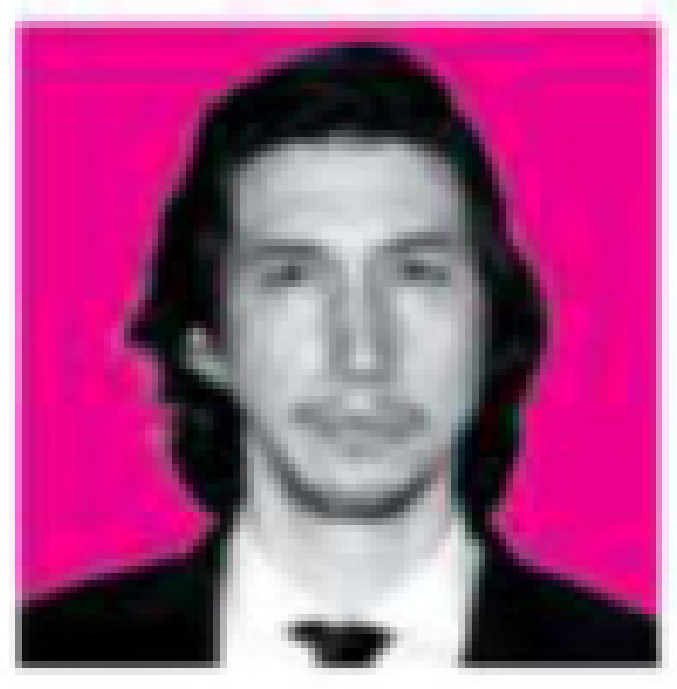
*Give the **Force Awakens** cast credit: They've deflected reporters' questions about the top secret movie with the skill of a Jedi performing a mind trick. Here are some of their most entertaining replies.*

DOMHNALL GLEESON

"There's a guy in that window out there with a sniper rifle trained on you and another one...trained on me.... If you ask a question that disrespects the NDA, there's just going to be a *poof*."

LUPITA NYONG'O

"I can tell you that I'm going to a galaxy far, far away."



ADAM DRIVER

"I play Jabba the Hutt's brother, Tim the Hutt. You know, he has a drinking problem and can't find his car throughout the entire movie."

CARRIE FISHER

"I have to censor myself, which is not an impulse of mine. It's like D-Day. If the Nazis find out we're coming...! But I understand.... People grew up with these characters, so it's their childhoods."

Mark Hamill has seen his likeness on dozens of Luke Skywalker figurines, but even he admits that the emotion of being back in the *Star Wars* galaxy can be overwhelming at times. Playing the son of Anakin was a huge part of his past—and he was certain it would stay there. "I don't know that I'm even completely recovered from my state of shock," he says. "Part of the experience of [*Star Wars*] in my life was coming down from that, putting it behind me. We had a beginning, a middle, and an end. And I certainly, in a million years, never expected to return. I thought, 'Even if they do more trilogies, my story is over.'"

This time around, behind the scenes, Hamill tried to make the most of being reunited with his former costars, including Carrie Fisher as Princess Leia and Harrison Ford as Han Solo, as well as getting to know the new generation of actors. "It's kind of like Scrooge on Christmas morning," Hamill says. "'Oh my God, this time I'm going to appreciate it in a way I wasn't able to as a young man.'"

We can't be sure what destiny awaits Luke until the Dec. 18 release. But what we do know for sure is, if he's back with his old friends, there's always a new hope. —ANTHONY BREZNICAN

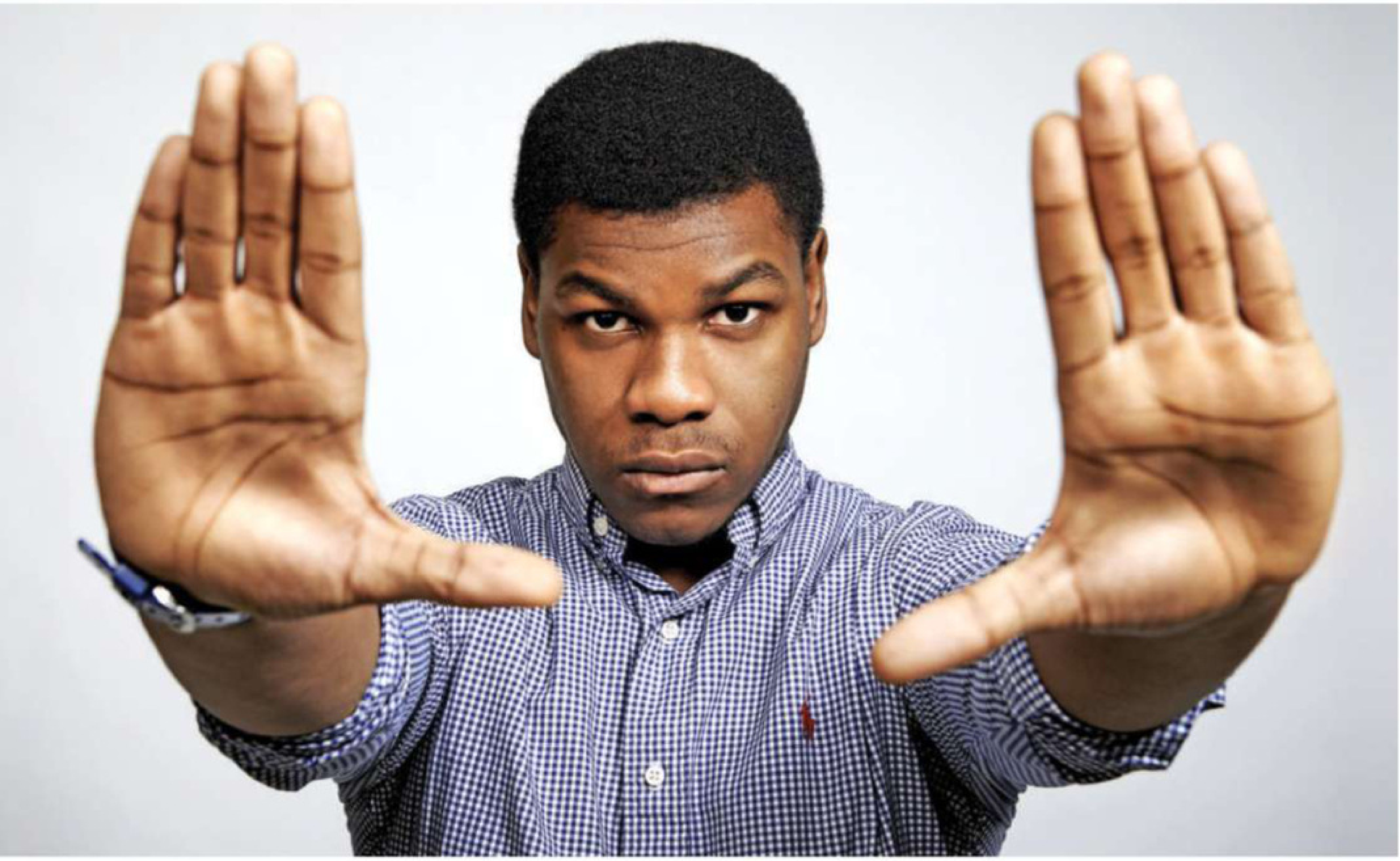
GLEESON: NOAM GALAI/WIREIMAGE.COM; NYONG'O: DIMITRIOS KAMBOURIS/GETTY IMAGES; DRIVER: LAURA CAVANAUGH/FILMMAGIC.COM; FISHER: TOMMASO BODDI/WIREIMAGE.COM

BREAKING BIG

JOHN BOYEGA

Star Wars: The Force Awakens DEC **18** ▪

Yup, that's him you see in the first seconds of the Force Awakens *trailer. The young British actor (previously best known for the indie* Attack the Block*) is about to see his career pop into light speed.*



JOHN BOYEGA'S RÉSUMÉ INCLUDES experience fighting intergalactic troublemakers. The 22-year-old Londoner made his big-screen debut in 2011's sci-fi/horror comedy *Attack the Block* as Moses, the leader of a street gang trying to defend an inner-city neighborhood from bloodthirsty alien invaders. Now he's the face of a new generation in the *Star Wars* galaxy, literally popping up in the *Force Awakens* trailer as a gasping stormtrooper named Finn, who is on the run from...something.

You may have seen the guy around before that. Boyega had a recurring role on the Fox series *24: Live Another Day*, and he stars in the as-yet-unreleased indie drama *Imperial Dreams*, which won an Audience Award at Sundance in 2014.

He hasn't done any interviews about *Star Wars* yet, of course, but he did put out a statement to fans on his Instagram account after the trailer debut. "Thank you for all the love and support! The fan mail and fan art has added to my joy! Isn't it crazy that *Star Wars* is actually happening? I'm in the movie, but as a *Star Wars* fan I am very excited! A year is a long time but it will be worth the wait."

The world of Skywalker and Vader has not always been a diverse one, but progress seems to have come to a galaxy far, far away. At the end of his Instagram message, Boyega also had words for those who criticized the idea of a black stormtrooper: "To whom it may concern...Get used to it. :)"
—ANTHONY BREZNICAN

Photograph by **CHRISTOPHER BEYER**

Chris Hemsworth, Benjamin Walker, Tom Holland, and Brendan Gleeson

ON THE SET

THOR GOES TO *SEA*

CHRIS HEMSWORTH TRADES IN HIS HAMMER FOR A WHALER'S HARPOON IN RON HOWARD'S **IN THE HEART OF THE SEA**, A PERIOD ACTION DRAMA BASED ON THE TRUE STORY OF AN 1820 SHIPWRECK THAT STRANDED SAILORS IN THE OCEAN FOR 90 DAYS—AND INSPIRED *MOBY-DICK*.

MARCH **13**

2015 PREVIEW

CHRIS HEMSWORTH IS WATERLOGGED. We're on the set of Ron Howard's *In the Heart of the Sea*, where, inside a gigantic water tank, the actor is wrestling with the sail of a boat. A gimbal rocks the vessel while water cannons pummel him mercilessly. Hemsworth is playing a 19th-century whaler battling a raging storm, but right now, with his bare feet and ragged clothes, he looks like a contestant in a particularly sadistic, aquatic-themed episode of *American Ninja Warrior*. On almost any other film, today's scene (shot at London's Leavesden Studios) would be among the most physically demanding. But for Hemsworth, it's a walk in the park compared with the weeks they shot in a tank outside during a chilly English fall. "When you're freezing," he says, "you don't have to act uncomfortable, you *are* uncomfortable."

Feeling uncomfortable is about as good as it gets for many of the characters in Howard's upcoming film. Based on Nathaniel Philbrick's award-winning book of the same name,

Photograph by **SARAH DUNN**

MY 2015

"I'M EXCITED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF GOING TO COMIC-CON 2015 *WITH* CRIMSON PEAK. *I'VE NEVER BEEN, AND I MIGHT EVEN BRING MY BROTHER BECAUSE HE'S REALLY OBSESSED WITH ALL THAT TOO."* —JESSICA CHASTAIN

Hemsworth in *In the Heart of the Sea*

Sea tells the true story of the Nantucket whaling ship the *Essex*, which was destroyed in 1820 by one of the very beasts the crew was hunting. Following the attack, the sailors faced the prospect of dying of starvation and dehydration as they fought the elements for 90 days, desperate to find land. The dramatic saga helped inspire Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*, and in the movie, Brendan Gleeson portrays an *Essex* sailor who, three decades after the shipwreck, recounts his whale of a tale to none other than Melville himself (*Skyfall*'s Ben Whishaw). Tom Holland plays the younger Gleeson, while Benjamin Walker is the captain of the *Essex*, who clashes with his much more experienced deputy (Hemsworth). "He's got a first mate who's a real pain in the ass," says Walker, although it's possible he's biased.

It was Hemsworth who asked Howard to come aboard as director. The two had worked together on *Rush*, and luckily for the actor, Howard was keen to get his feet wet on an ocean-set movie, despite certain primal misgivings. "I'm a pale-skinned redhead—I'm a little frightened of the ocean," he says. "But I just know there's great drama out there. I thought, 'Well, this is my time to finally go to sea.'" And yes, they did make it out to the actual open water, shooting certain sequences in the Canary Islands. "It was fantastic," says Hemsworth. "We'd basically get on the boat in the morning, sail six hours in one direction, turn around, and sail all the way back." The biggest drama took place on land, however. "We were shooting on the beach one day and this torrential downpour hit," he says. "Boulders were literally rolling down the hills. They were like, 'Yeah, we've got to get out of here because everything's about to collapse.'"

By today's standards, men who slaughter whales for a living don't make for the most natural big-screen heroes (even ones who look like Thor). But Hemsworth points out that 200 years ago, it was a very different kettle of fish—or, rather, giant sea-dwelling mammals. "Whalers went away to sea for potentially two or three years in pretty horrific conditions," the actor says. "It was like going off to war." As for Howard, he certainly didn't set out to encourage any future Captain Ahabs. "I'm a longtime Greenpeace donor, so I wasn't going to make something that contradicted [my values]," he says. "I don't think anyone wants to get on a whaling ship after this movie." —CLARK COLLIS

IT'S GONNA BE A CHRIS HEMSWORTH KIND OF YEAR

With three more movies on the horizon, the Aussie actor will be ubiquitous in 2015

BLACKHAT
In Michael Mann's cyberthriller, Hemsworth stars as the world's hunkiest hacker. *JAN. 16*

AVENGERS: AGE OF ULTRON
Mighty Thor returns! *MAY 1*

VACATION
The actor takes a stab at comedy, playing Audrey Griswold's husband. *OCT. 9*

CHASTAIN: HUMBERTO CARRENO/STARTRAKSPHOTO; *IN THE HEART OF THE SEA*: JONATHAN PRIME

TREND ALERT

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE WILL RULE THE (MOVIE) WORLD

FROM **AVENGERS: AGE OF ULTRON** TO **TERMINATOR: GENISYS**, MACHINES—AS BOTH VILLAINS AND HEROES—ARE NEXT YEAR'S HOTTEST CHARACTERS. HUMANS BEWARE.

Chappie	MARCH **6** ▪
Ex Machina	APRIL **10** ▪
Avengers: Age of Ultron	MAY **1** ▪
Terminator: Genisys	JULY **1** ▪

▪ (From left) *Avengers: Age of Ultron; Chappie*

THE SAD THING ABOUT ARTIFICIAL intelligence, French philosopher Jean Baudrillard once remarked, is that it lacks artifice and therefore any *real* intelligence. But try telling that to the bling-wearing, gangsta-limping robot hero of the upcoming sci-fi thriller *Chappie*.

Engineered as a security drone for Johannesburg's militarized police force in a crumbling, not-so-distant-future South Africa, the bipedal technocreation is experimentally rebooted by an idealistic scientist (played by *Slumdog Millionaire*'s Dev Patel) to feel and think for itself, becoming a kind of bulletproof Pinocchio in the process. But when a pair of street thugs kidnap the droid, Chappie—as they christen him—gets a fresh set of directives: carjacking, Glock-popping, and

a vocabulary of misunderstood hood-isms, such as "What's up, f---mother?"

For co-writer/director Neill Blomkamp, the $50 million *Chappie* (out March 6) functions less as a glimpse into the future than a "weird coming-of-age story."

"It's an exploration into innocence—about this [created] being that wants the affection of his parents, but he's split between two sets of parents," says Blomkamp, the science-fiction phenom behind *Elysium* and *District 9*. "He's a robot that's more human than the human beings are."

In that regard, though, Chappie (*District 9*'s Sharlto Copley via performance capture) is hardly an only child. Come 2015, a crush of forward-looking filmmakers with a slate of high-profile projects are using artificial intelligence to grapple with existential dilemmas of the all-too-human variety. They breathe life—as well as independent thought, churlishness, ultraviolence, even libido—into machines to examine humans' increasingly dynamic interface with tech.

BOLD PREDICTION

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2

Idris Elba will be the new James Bond

Daniel Craig returns as 007 for *SPECTRE* (out Nov. 6), but we think this Bond flick may be his last, and Elba has the beauty, brawn, and British accent to replace him.

Following an illustrious line of vividly imagined cinematic AI that stretches from the tenderhearted machines of *WALL•E* to the bioengineered human replicants of *Blade Runner* to the homicidal HAL 9000 computer in *2001: A Space Odyssey*, these new films tap into something bigger than just android entropy.

At a time when information-age connectivity defines daily life and foments actual revolution, it's no coincidence movies are showcasing sentient automatons as lovers, errant children, and destroyers of the world. They are the fulcrum of fantasies, but also the apex of our anxiety. Will the thing we have built obliterate us? "It's our new Frankenstein myth," says Joss Whedon, returning writer-director of *Avengers: Age of Ultron* (May 1), which features an indestructible robotic villain with limitless intelligence and a pronounced mean streak. "We create something in our own image and the thing turns on us. It has that pain of 'Well, why was I made? I want to kill Daddy.' "

In Ultron's case, that Oedipus complex finds its outlet in Robert Downey Jr.'s Tony Stark. The billionaire genius/playboy industrialist character who moonlights as Iron Man builds Ultron (performed and voiced by James Spader) as a superhero substitute to protect and serve humankind from otherworldly peril. Complications arise, however, when the self-replicating, eight-foot-tall battle-bot decides man is his own worst enemy and must be stopped. (Whedon used the parent-killing baby in Ray Bradbury's story "The Small Assassin" as a reference.) "I don't remember seeing an artificial-intelligence movie where the robot is bonkers—the most emotionally unstable person in the film—and who has the knowledge of 3,000 years of recorded history and who is a pouty teen, all at the same time," Whedon says.

> *"IT'S OUR NEW FRANKENSTEIN MYTH: WE CREATE SOMETHING THAT TURNS ON US."*
>
> **JOSS WHEDON**

Not pouty but similarly hell-bent on eradicating humankind is the army of

"I JUST FINISHED LONESOME DOVE, *SO I'M GOING TO TRY TO READ ALL OF LARRY McMURTRY'S STUFF. HE'S GREAT. I'M GOING TO DRINK LESS BEER, MORE ICED TEA, AND SIT BACK AND READ SOME MORE BOOKS."* —CHRIS PRATT

marauding humanoids that beams in from the future for *Terminator: Genisys* (July 1). Topping their to-do list: eliminate a ragtag band of rebel humans led by John Connor (*Dawn of the Planet of the Apes* star Jason Clarke), Kyle Reese (*Divergent*'s Jai Courtney), and Connor's warrior future-mother, Sarah (*Game of Thrones*' Emilia Clarke). The $170 million sci-fi epic's plot arc represents a bombastic dramatization of the Technological Singularity—the tipping point at which, some academics believe, AI will exceed human control and overrun our civilization.

That future doesn't seem that sci-fi anymore, in our era of self-driving cars and automated iPhone conversations. Even such acclaimed theorists as Elon Musk and Stephen Hawking, respectively, decry artificial intelligence as "our biggest existential threat" and warn it could "spell the end of the human race." All of which fueled *Genisys* producer David Ellison's decision to relaunch the *Terminator* franchise. "That dividing line between man and machine has never been closer," he says. "The Singularity feels like it's not that far off."

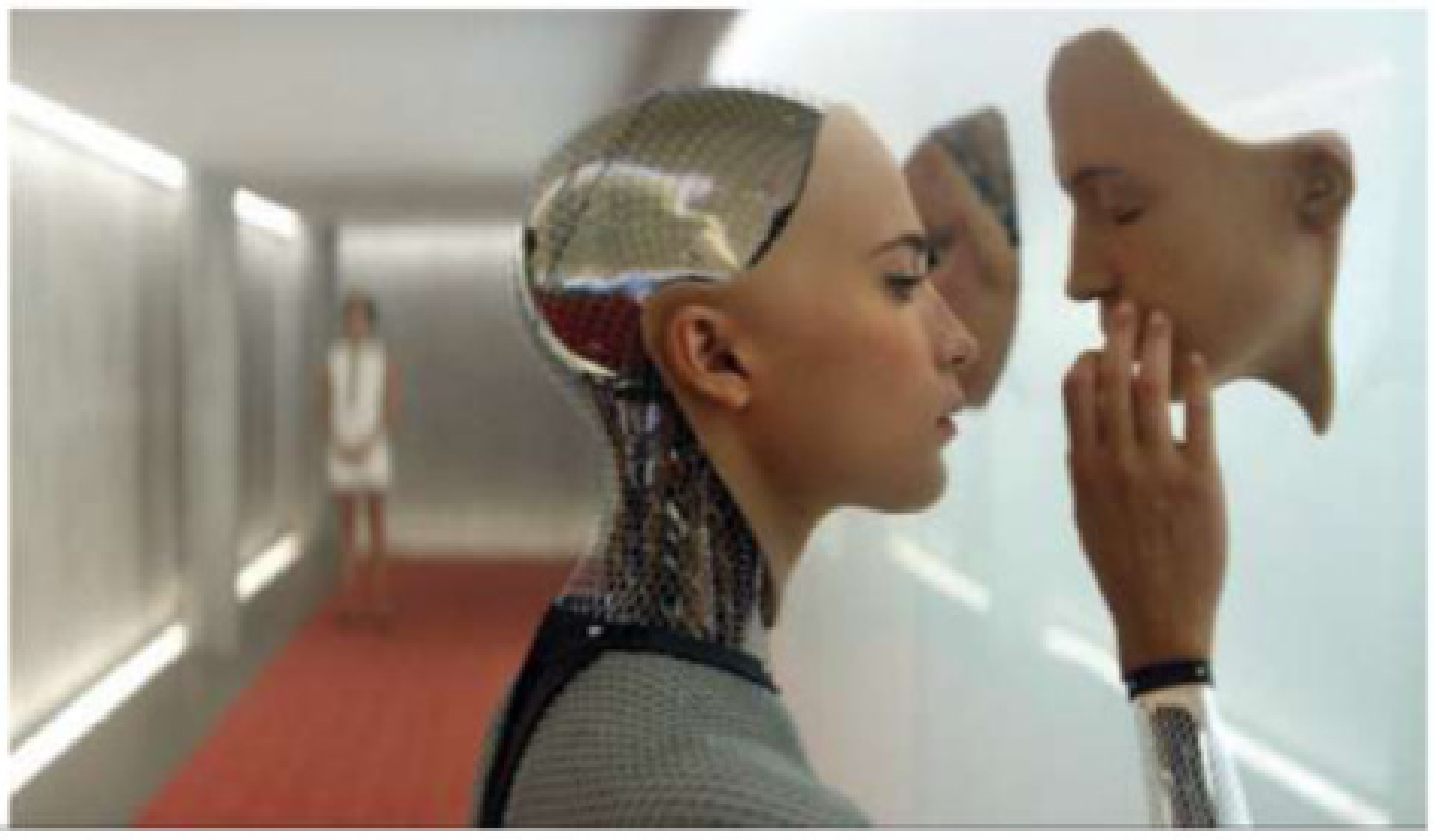
Neither, for that matter, is the kind of man-machine sexytime envisioned by *Ex Machina* (April 10). The science-fiction thriller follows a low-level computer coder (*Unbroken*'s Domhnall Gleeson) working for a Google-like Internet search engine who wins a competition to spend a week at an Alaskan retreat with the company's eccentric but brilliant CEO (Oscar Isaac). Expecting a promotion, the younger man is instead introduced to Ava (*Anna Karenina*'s Alicia Vikander), a sentient AI whose physical beauty is undimmed by "her" visible robot machinery. And he must conduct a Turing test, the complex analysis measuring a machine's ability to demonstrate intelligent human behavior, while wrestling with his own conflicted romantic longing for the humanoid.

According to *Ex Machina* director Alex Garland (the novelist-screenwriter responsible for such dystopian future-set films as *28 Days Later* and *Sunshine*), the movie addresses the type of God complex that necessarily accompanies creating artificial life and also tweaks certain hard-and-fast rules governing human attraction. "The film is saying, 'Here is a female-looking robot. A very beautiful machine. But it is a *machine*,'" Garland says. "And then it puts the viewer through the experience of the character in the film, where you become increasingly blind to that fact."

The blurring of that emotional dividing line between human and machine is also at the center of *Chappie*, of course. The movie's goal, says producer Simon Kinberg (*X-Men: Days of Future Past*), is to foster heartfelt emotion for the most bloodless of man-made objects. "It makes you fall in love with and forget that you're watching a robot," he says. "You care about him. You're worried about which path he'll take just as you would for a young boy growing up in a dangerous neighborhood."

Real-world technology may not have overcome philosopher Baudrillard's concerns about artificial intelligence (yet), but this year, at least the movies will. ■

—CHRIS LEE, WITH ADDITIONAL REPORTING BY NICOLE SPERLING



Terminator: Genisys; Ex Machina

Terminator: Genisys photograph by **ART STREIBER**

PRATT: MCMULLAN/SIPA USA

BRIAN BOWEN SMITH

Kevin Hart and Josh Gad: How to Be Fake Best Friends

*In **The Wedding Ringer**, a dorky groom (Gad) hires a slick pro (Hart) to be his best man. It's funny and awkward, just like this interview.*

JAN **16** ■

In the movie, you two are strangers who have to go from zero to best friends in no time. Did you know each other before filming?

JOSH GAD I didn't even know *of* Kevin. I *think* we went to the same temple. We definitely got a crash course in pretending to be each other's friend.

KEVIN HART I can honestly say that he's a friend now.

[*Gad puts his hand on Hart's.*]

HART Stop it, don't touch me.

Pretending to be someone's friend must be useful in Hollywood.

GAD Absolutely.

HART You know who pretends? Dicks. So Josh, maybe you need to look in the mirror and just admit that this whole thing is false.

GAD Have you ever had to fake a friendship, other than this one?

HART No, but I'm around the same people all the time. I don't want new people in my circle.

Did your respective circles ever form a Venn diagram?

GAD You see, Kevin, a Venn diagram is when...

HART What is he saying? Is he asking about Vin Diesel's next picture? You know my head hurts when I think about things.

GAD I met all your guys. The Venn diagram didn't cross over into my friends, though. He didn't even want introductions.

HART Josh doesn't have any friends. I've been waiting to meet people, and no one ever comes around. I remember one time Josh showed up and the door stayed open when he came in, and I thought, "Oh, he has some people with him."

GAD There was nobody.

Did you guys hang out during the shoot?

HART I took Josh to a black nightclub and he enjoyed himself thoroughly. And I had him spend a thousand ones on exotic dancers.

GAD Kevin taught me the art of wasting money as quickly as possible. I wanted to pocket the money and send my child to a good school.

I assume once I leave, you two are going to go into separate corners and not speak to each other.

GAD That's a valid assumption.

HART We don't like each other.

GAD I'm going to be honest with you, Kevin and I went in on some real estate deals that went south, so it's a little awkward right now. The two people you see over there are actually lawyers.

HART That'd be amazing, if I got you into a Ponzi scheme. "Oh my God, Josh, this thing is a no-brainer. Look at me, look at my lifestyle. You think this comes from acting? It comes from selling toothbrushes."

GAD Kevin, what? I can't go in on a toothbrush investment. That was my Olaf money. Now I'm broke. I'm going to be the guy on Hollywood Boulevard in the costume, doing Olaf by day, selling drugs by night, and it's all because Kevin got me into this toothbrush Ponzi scheme.

You've got a carrot taped to your nose.

HART Is that a real carrot?

GAD [*In Olaf's voice*] It's called my nose, Kevin!

HART If this movie doesn't do well, that's us in 10 years. He's crazy Olaf and I'm doing *Ride Along 8* without Cube.

—KEITH STASKIEWICZ

ALSO ON DECK FOR 2015

Hart costars with Will Ferrell in **GET HARD** *MARCH 27* and Gad appears in the sci-fi adventure **PIXELS** *JULY 24*

THE SHOT

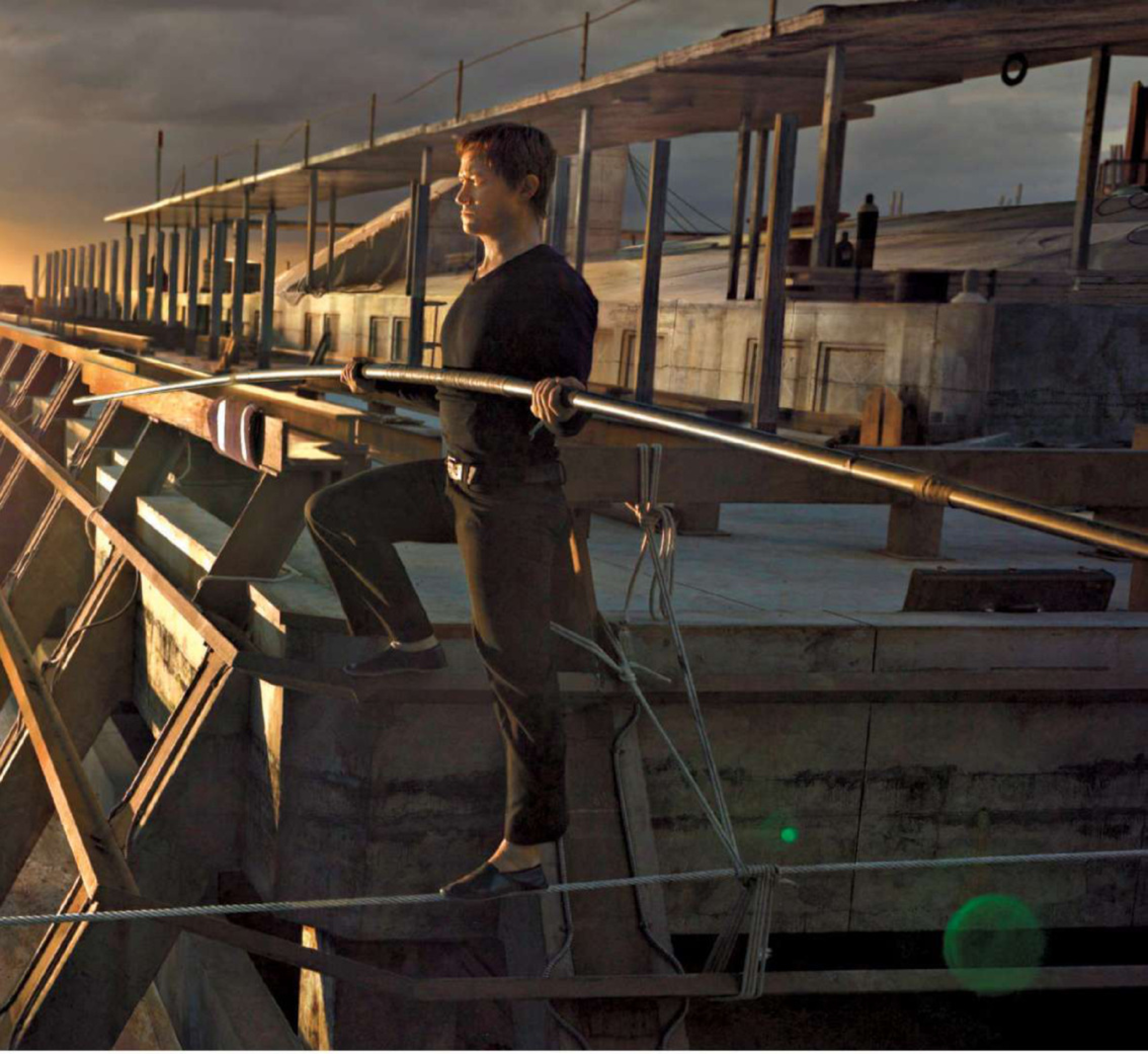
Joseph Gordon-Levitt's Wild *Walk*

THE ACTOR PERFORMS A HIGH-WIRE ACT (LITERALLY) IN **THE WALK**, STARRING AS THE DAREDEVIL WHO TIPTOED BETWEEN THE TWIN TOWERS AT 1,350 FEET. DIRECTOR ROBERT ZEMECKIS EXPLAINS ONE BREATHTAKING SCENE.

OCT **2**

Joseph Gordon-Levitt

SEEING THE WORLD Trade Center again is bound to rouse strong emotions, but Robert Zemeckis' upcoming drama aims to make it nostalgic instead of distressing—like discovering a new photo of someone who's gone forever. The story is set nearly three decades before 9/11, and the tale is both true-life and death-defying. Joseph Gordon-Levitt stars as Philippe Petit, the French high-wire walker who, in



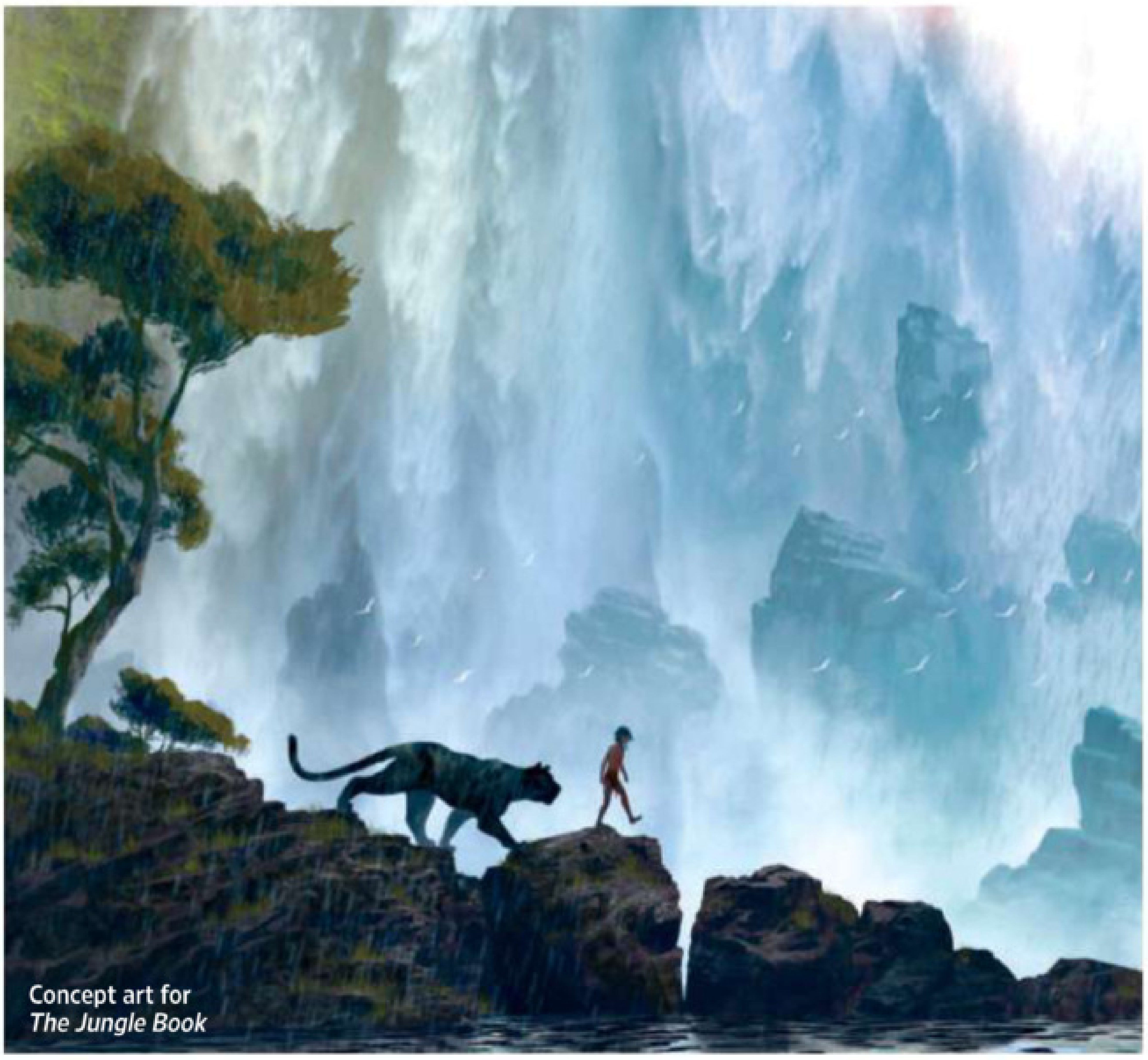
1974, strung a cable between the two 110-story skyscrapers and walked across it, 1,350 feet above Manhattan.

"Re-creating the Twin Towers in a photo-real way—only movies can do that," says Zemeckis (*Flight*). "The towers are definitely characters in the movie, and Philippe loved them and spoke to them as if they were partners, accomplices, as if they were living, breathing things."

The production built replicas of the rooftops on a stage in Montreal. The rest of the image—the dawning sky, the mist and dust, the tiny cityscape below—was all "digital extensions," as Zemeckis puts it. What's not CG is the man on the cable. Gordon-Levitt did have a safety rig, but he trained with Petit to balance without falling.

During the actual stunt, Petit, who was the subject of the Oscar-winning 2008 documentary *Man on Wire*, walked between the towers for about 45 minutes, putting on an awesome show. During shooting, Gordon-Levitt would balance for hours. "When Joe was walking on the wire, it was 12 feet off the ground," Zemeckis says. "We had to be able to get the cameras under it and over it. You usually only get to see a wire walker by looking up, but our camera is looking down, so everyone gets that magnificent sense of vertigo." —ANTHONY BREZNICAN

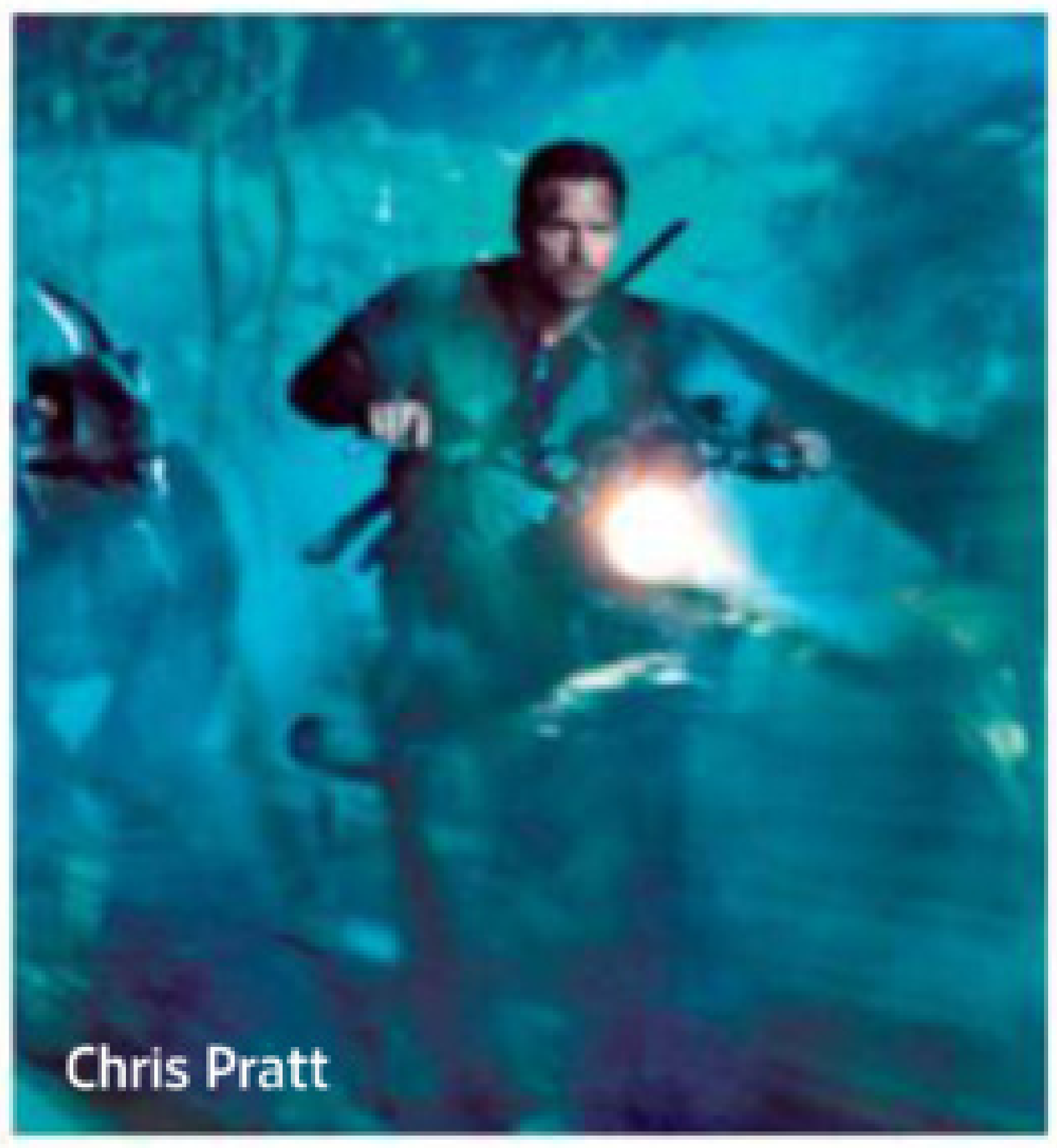
15 More


Concept art for *The Jungle Book*

THE JUNGLE BOOK

OCT **9** ■

Rudyard Kipling's 19th-century tale of a boy raised by wolves has been adapted more than a dozen times, but Walt Disney's 1967 animated musical remains the gold standard. Now director Jon Favreau (*Iron Man*) is giving it a 21st-century tech update. Newcomer Neel Sethi plays Mowgli, and there's a lot riding on those young shoulders. Not only does he do his own tree climbing—"A 10-year-old in a loincloth is hard to double with a stuntman," Favreau says—but he's also the only live-action actor in a performance-capture spectacle of photo-realistic animals, including Baloo (Bill Murray), King Louie (Christopher Walken), and Rakcha, the mother wolf (Lupita Nyong'o). Oh, and yes, Murray is singing "The Bare Necessities," Favreau says: "How do you not do that?" —NICOLE SPERLING


Chris Pratt

JURASSIC WORLD

JUNE **15** ■

Set 22 years after Steven Spielberg's original film, *Jurassic World* presents a swank new version of the dino amusement park. The place is thriving, but in an effort to create more buzz, scientists breed a ferocious hybrid dinosaur that brings death, destruction, and lots of freaked-out, running-for-their-lives humans. "There are dinosaurs and there's the *other*—this thing that is not one of them, that is not of them," says director Colin Trevorrow (*Safety Not Guaranteed*). Fresh off his blockbuster turn in *Guardians of the Galaxy*, Chris Pratt plays a researcher who teams up with the park's operations manager (Bryce Dallas Howard) to stop the giant beast. "I grew up loving *Jurassic Park* and these epic spectacles," he says. "I saw [the first one] opening night in the theater. It was a huge moment for me." *Jurassic World* may well prove to be another. —TIM STACK

THE JUNGLE BOOK: JONATHAN BACH. © 2014 DISNEY ENTERPRISES, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED; CRAIG: FRANCOIS DUHAMEL

Daniel Craig

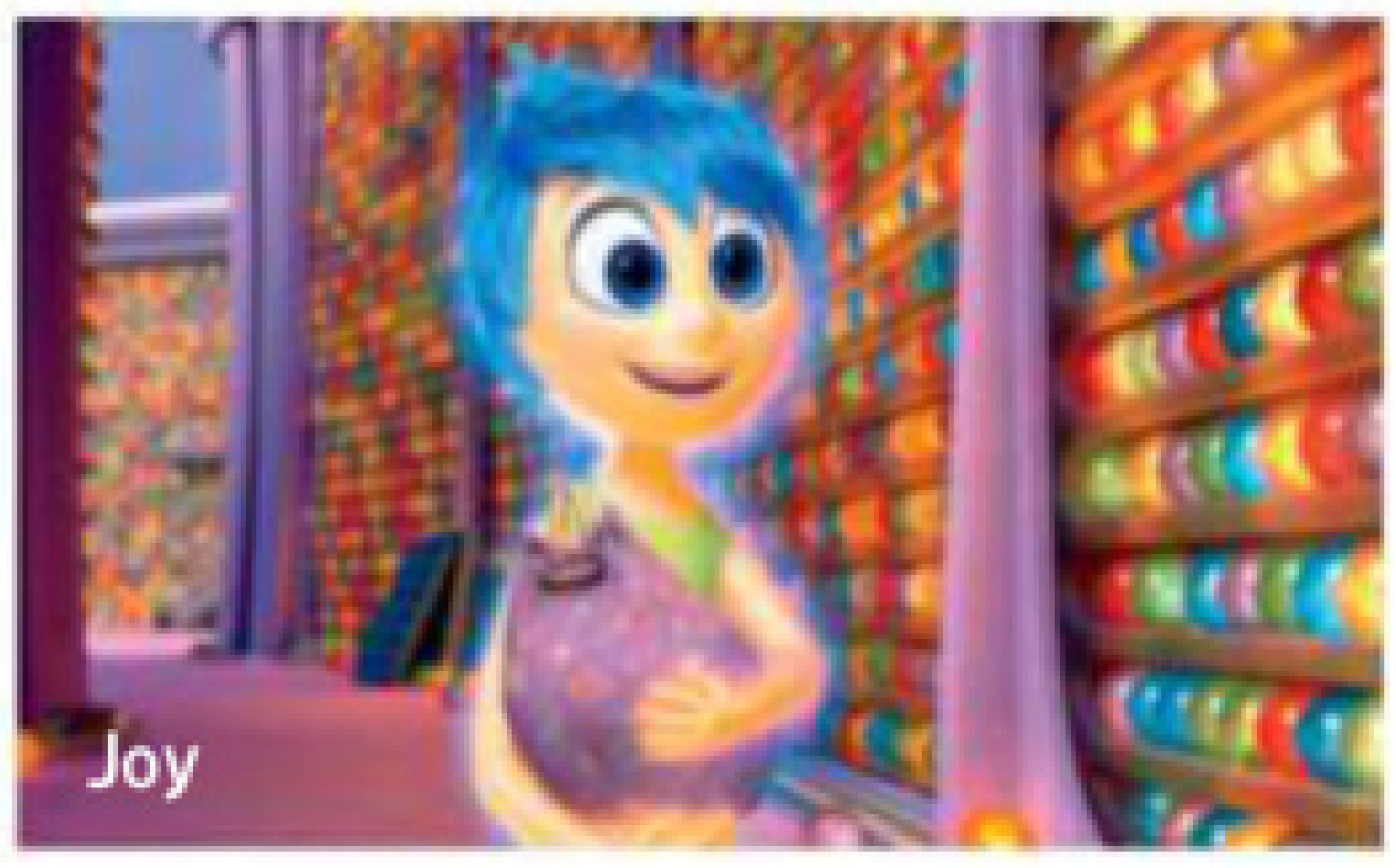
SPECTRE

NOV **6** ■

The 24th Bond installment pits 007 against a foe introduced in 1962's *Dr. No*: evil global terrorist conglomerate SPECTRE. Daniel Craig is back, of course, and joining him are director Sam Mendes (returning after *Skyfall*) and Christoph Waltz, who turns up as the mysterious villain Oberhauser. —CHRIS LEE

Movies

MAD MAX REBOOTS, JAMES BOND RETURNS, JAKE GYLLENHAAL SCALES EVEREST, KATNISS BIDS FAREWELL, AND CHRIS PRATT GETS HIS RAPTOR ON. YOUR GUIDE TO THE COOLEST FLICKS OF 2015.


Joy

INSIDE OUT

JUNE **19**

Directed by Pete Docter, Pixar's latest is the story of a tween girl's emotions. Joy (voiced by Amy Poehler) is the leader, and she struggles to keep the gang in line when the girl starts a new school. Docter likens the feelings to another iconic crew: "It's our own version of the Seven Dwarfs." —NINA TERRERO

Michelle Rodriguez and Vin Diesel

FURIOUS 7

APRIL **3**

Cars parachute out of planes, Jason Statham plays the new villain, James Wan (*Saw*) directs, and things are getting darker for the auto-action franchise. "Our characters are going into a shadow world beyond what they could have ever imagined," says star and producer Vin Diesel. —DARREN FRANICH

Tom Hardy and Nicholas Hoult

MAD MAX: FURY ROAD

MAY **15**

Let's call it a meet-angry. When Mad Max (Tom Hardy) first encounters the imposing Imperator Furiosa (Charlize Theron) in *Fury Road,* the two engage in a brutal brawl. They have a common enemy in a warlord (who counts Nicholas Hoult's Nux as a devotee) but won't join forces until they have it out in the dirt. "This is not just two people standing there punching each other," says writer-director George Miller. "This is a question of which one of them is going to survive." Though Miller won't say who wins, it's clear he holds Furiosa in high regard. One day during production, he says, "Charlize was driving the war rig back to base camp, and I was sitting in the cabin behind her. I remember thinking, 'She is the Imperator, and if this was a real wasteland and we were at war, I'd be really happy she's on our side.'" —NICOLE SPERLING

Jennifer Lawrence

The Hunger Games: Mockingjay—Part 2

NOV **20**

What awaits Katniss in the final chapter? Taking down President Snow. That means plenty of action, but for Julianne Moore, who returns as rebel ally Alma Coin, there's another side to these films. "They are personal stories about a young woman growing up, but with an incredible political message." —NICOLE SPERLING

INSIDE OUT: PIXAR; *FURIOUS 7:* SCOTT GARFIELD; *MAD MAX: FURY ROAD:* JASIN BOLAND; LAWRENCE: MURRAY CLOSE

Shailene Woodley

INSURGENT

MARCH **20** ■

Society is heading for war in the sequel to *Divergent*, which finds Tris (Shailene Woodley) and Four (Theo James) continuing to lead the resistance against the corrupt government. Evil mastermind Jeanine (Kate Winslet) wants to wipe out Tris and her kind, and according to Woodley, the plot takes some turns away from Veronica Roth's book. "There's a lot people won't expect," she says. The amped-up action meant Woodley got to spend quality time in a harness, suspended in midair. "It pinches and it's uncomfortable, but you feel like you're Tinker Bell or Peter Pan." —SARA VILKOMERSON

Jake Gyllenhaal, Michael Kelly, and Josh Broiin

EVEREST

SEPT **18** ■

The snowcapped thriller stars Jason Clarke and Jake Gyllenhaal as guides leading the treacherous 1996 expedition to Mount Everest, where a blizzard killed eight people. The movie shot in Italy's Dolomite mountain range, at Everest itself, and in a London studio that offered slightly less hostile conditions. "You're blowing salt in the face of the actors, who are high up and roped in," says director Baltasar Kormákur (*Contraband*). "The danger kept going even inside." —NICOLE SPERLING

Jessica Chastain

CRIMSON PEAK

OCT **16** ■

Guillermo del Toro (*Pacific Rim*) wants his next movie to bring horror back to its gnarled, twisted roots. "It's very much in an old mold with a little bit of extra depravity and brutality sprinkled in," says the director, who found inspiration in such classic gothic films as *The Innocents* and *Rebecca*. Set in the 19th century, the film stars Mia Wasikowska as a new bride who discovers that her husband (Tom Hiddleston) is a tad off. Jessica Chastain plays her sister-in-law, a role that turned out to be more intense than she anticipated. "It was really draining, emotionally and spiritually," says Chastain. "The experience took more out of me than anything I'd ever done. When I finished I had to take some time off." For an actress who's been averaging three movies a year—and 2015 is no exception—that's saying something. —KEITH STASKIEWICZ

Ted and Mark Wahlberg

TED 2

JUNE **26** ■

Everyone's favorite foulmouthed teddy bear is back! Seth MacFarlane won't reveal plot details, but does confirm that we won't see any plush additions to Ted's entourage. "It's basically the way we treated Stewie in *Family Guy*," the co-writer/director says. "He's the only one of his kind who can talk." —KEITH STASKIEWICZ

INSURGENT: ANDREW COOPER; *CRIMSON PEAK*: KERRY HAYES; *EVEREST*: JASIN BOLAND

Tom Hanks and Steven Spielberg on set

SPIELBERG'S COLD WAR SPY THRILLER

OCT **16**

Tom Hanks is James Donovan, the true-life lawyer who worked with the CIA to negotiate the release of Francis Gary Powers, a U.S. pilot shot down over Soviet airspace in 1960 while piloting a U-2 spy plane. "This is one of the more astonishing stories about the Cold War I'd ever heard," says director Steven Spielberg. "James Donovan is a hero to me, and Tom made him so completely accessible. I've always wanted to make a spy movie, and this is that and then some." —ANTHONY BREZNICAN

Hugh Jackman and Levi Miller

PAN

JULY **24**

Hollywood's latest spin on J.M. Barrie's tale recasts the Neverland classic as an origin story. Peter (Levi Miller) and Hook (Garrett Hedlund) are now partners who, along with Rooney Mara's Tiger Lily, try to escape the nefarious pirate Blackbeard, played by a devilish Hugh Jackman. "Hook's less of a villain in this; he just wants to get home," says Hedlund, whose character is a dashing Errol Flynn type. "But he's also quite the manipulator, a blooming anarchist." We're, um, hooked. —KEITH STASKIEWICZ

Britt Robertson

TOMORROWLAND

MAY **22**

All of George Clooney's tomorrows are now yesterdays. In the film directed by Brad Bird (*Mission: Impossible—Ghost Protocol*), Clooney's Frank Walker is an exile from a realm known as Tomorrowland who becomes the reluctant guide for a young woman (*Under the Dome*'s Britt Robertson). "Something has happened in this place," says Damon Lindelof (*World War Z*), who created the story with EW critic Jeff Jensen. "Determining why it's been kept a secret, and why Frank Walker is living here instead of there, is all in the spine of our adventure." —ANTHONY BREZNICAN

Tina Fey and Amy Poehler

SISTERS

DEC **18**

You've seen teenagers wreck their parents' houses with raging benders. But in *Sisters*, Tina Fey and Amy Poehler do it as fully grown adults. "People our age need a hardcore house party more than a 17-year-old," says Fey. "What are they cutting loose from?" The comic duo costar as estranged sisters who throw one last bash before their parents sell their childhood home. "We both get to go pretty crazy," says Poehler, who, incidentally, is looking forward to a fierce box office showdown come next December. "We said we'd only do the movie if it opened against *Star Wars*," she says. "We're not scared. It's what gets us up in the morning: We are going to f---ing crush *Star Wars*." —SARA VILKOMERSON

HANKS AND SPIELBERG: JAAP BUITENDIJK; *PAN*: LAURIE SPARHAM; *SISTERS*: K.C. BAILEY

TV

THE **SHOWS** AND STARS YOU NEED TO KNOW IN THE NEW YEAR

ON THE SET

Community Clicks Refresh

WHEN NBC CANCELED IT IN MAY, **COMMUNITY** WAS SUPPOSED TO DROP OUT OF TV FOR GOOD. INSTEAD, THE SERIES TOOK A CUE FROM ITS CHARACTERS AND REENROLLED AT YAHOO.

WINTER ■ *YAHOO*

SEVEN MONTHS AGO, *Community* left television forever. The sitcom about Greendale Community College had lasted five seasons: 97 episodes of community-college high jinks and meta-cultural adventures, of bottle episodes and animated outings. Five years of critical adoration, low ratings, regime changes, and fan campaigns. "#SixSeasonsAndAMovie," pleaded the hashtags, "#SaveGreendale." On May 9, 2014, it all ended: NBC canceled *Community*.

The cast and crew were resigned to their fate. Several members of the ensemble met up at Orsa & Winston in downtown L.A. for a casual farewell dinner. The mood was lighthearted. "It was like we had a great wake for the show," says Alison Brie, who plays tightly wound Annie. "We had already all grieved, then we all got together for a celebratory dinner!"

There were rumblings that the show might go on. Although it aired on NBC, *Community* is produced by Sony, and the company had the ability to carry the show to a new network. This didn't

JUSTIN LUBIN/COURTESY OF SONY PICTURES TELEVISION/YAHOO

Gillian Jacobs, Alison Brie, and Joel McHale

seem outside the realm of possibility. One year before *Community*'s cancellation, Netflix aired the long-yearned-for fourth season of *Arrested Development*. The same year, *Cougar Town*—a low-rated sitcom beloved by, among other people, *Community* character Abed Nadir—jumped from ABC to TBS, magically transforming from a low-rated network sitcom into a high-rated cable sitcom.

At least one person seemed skeptical about the prospect of more *Community*: Dan Harmon, the show's creator and fired-then-rehired showrunner. In early May, Harmon posted a note to Tumblr that sounded resigned. "Ninety seven episodes," he wrote. "Over eighty pretty good ones. Mission accomplished." But privately, he still had hope. "I knew that Sony was talking to one company about the possibility of a streaming version," Harmon says. "Then, at the last minute, it became about Yahoo." Like many other digital concerns, the search-engine-giant-that-isn't-Google was looking to expand its original content. Sony asked: Would Harmon want to continue *Community* on Yahoo's incipient network, Yahoo Screen? "I said no," he says. "It's something that takes a little while to get used to."

Get used to it, America: Sometime this winter, *Community* will become the latest television show to air new episodes everywhere besides television. "We've always been a Web series," says Gillian Jacobs, returning as perpetual wet blanket Britta. "We're now just finally on the Web. It's a brave new world of..." she pauses. "TV?" she considers. "Content," she concludes.

When you go to the set of *Community*'s sixth season, there are two overriding feelings: that everything has changed, and that nothing has changed. When the actors talk about their new bosses, they sound a bit like orphans who suddenly got a new home in a giant mansion. "Yahoo is so cool," says star Joel McHale, a.k.a. Jeff Winger. "They love the show. They are serious about it. That is a huge difference." Multiple cast members mention the fact that Yahoo has already commissioned a promotional photo shoot. "It made us feel very special!" says Brie. "Like a real show." Jacobs is just eager to get outside. Literally: "We weren't allowed to shoot outside for a couple of years," she says. "I would watch other TV shows and be filled with envy when I could tell they were on location. I've heard rumors that we're going back to Los Angeles City College to shoot some exteriors!" Pause. "That shows you how pathetic our show is that we're excited about that."

The sets are also the same—but different. After NBC canceled the show, it lost its longtime home on the Paramount lot and has now taken up residence on the CBS Radford lot. The cast has shifted too. "Unfortunately, the *Community* tradition has become starting each season with the loss of another beloved cast member," says Harmon. Yvette Nicole Brown asked to be released from her contract to care for her father, which means her Shirley will follow Chevy Chase's Pierce and Donald Glover's Troy away

> *"WE'VE ALWAYS BEEN A WEB SERIES. WE'RE NOW JUST FINALLY ON THE WEB."*
>
> **GILLIAN JACOBS**

COMMUNITY: JUSTIN LUBIN/COURTESY OF SONY PICTURES TELEVISION/YAHOO

Jacobs, Danny Pudi, Brie, Paget Brewster, and McHale

MY 2015

"NEXT YEAR I HAVE TO GET ON SPOTIFY. *EVERYONE'S TOO BUSY TO TEACH ME HOW, AND MEANWHILE I'M OVER HERE, STUCK WITH CDS! COULD YOU COME OVER SOMETIME AND HELP ME OUT?"* —CHRISTINE BARANSKI

from the study table. (There appears to be an open-door policy on returning cast members, though. In a recent Reddit AMA, Chase claimed he was filming a cameo in the new season, which is doubly remarkable: He infamously clashed with Harmon during season 3, and Chase's character is dead.)

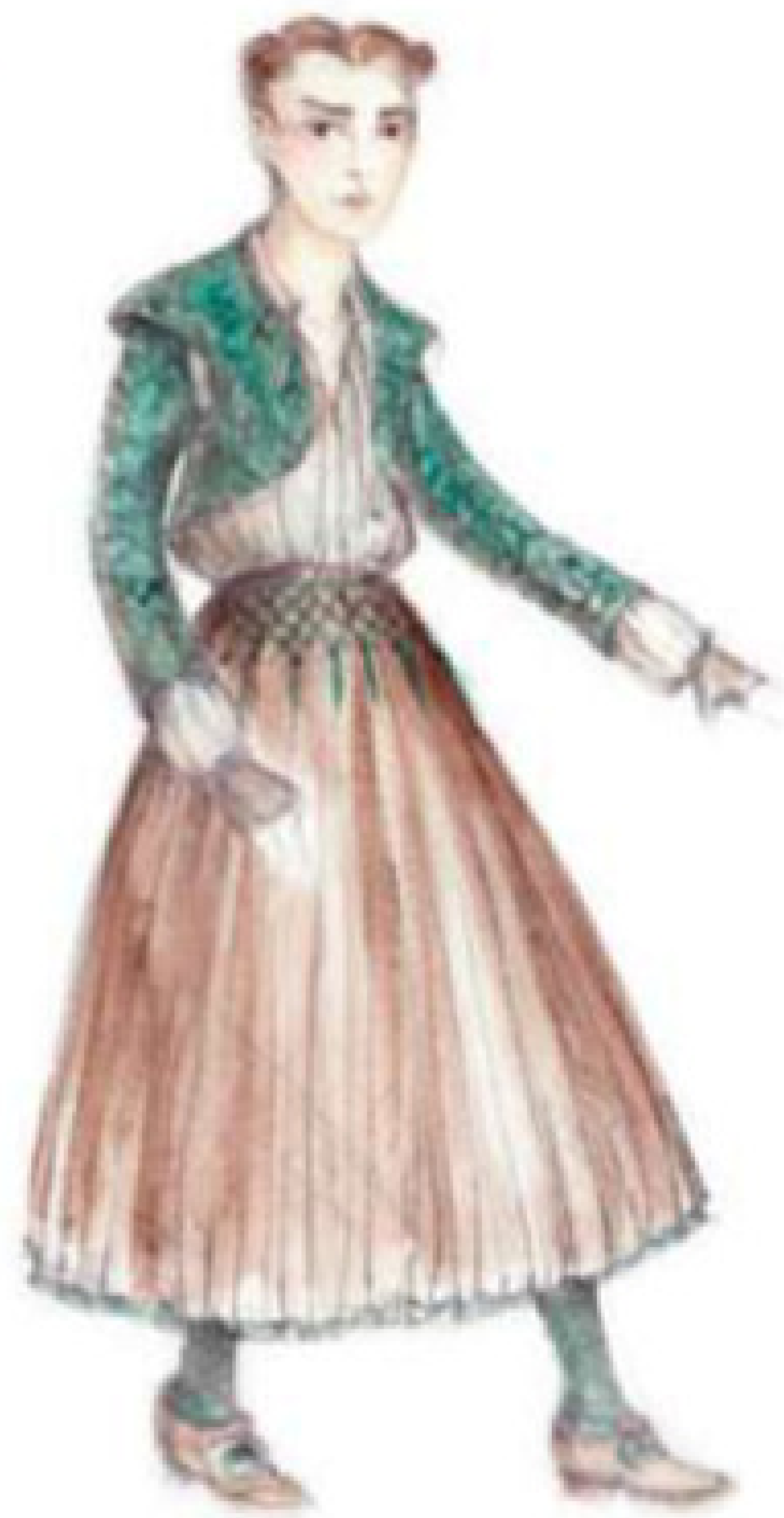
To replace the absent members of the study group, the show is bringing in two new characters. Paget Brewster (*Criminal Minds*) will play Frankie Dart, a troubleshooter hired to help Dean Pelton (Jim Rash) in the never-ending quest to save Greendale from oblivion. "She's there to help Greendale," says Harmon, "but she rubs up against the group, and particularly Jeff, the wrong way." Meanwhile, baritone-voiced character actor Keith David will join the cast as an inventor. "He's very smart, very proud, and made the mistake of focusing too much on his work in the past," says Harmon. "Now he has no idea what he's going to do with the last chapter of his life."

In their first week back on the new old set, *Community* cast members seem punchy and excited. When I interview McHale inside the dean's office, Jacobs wanders in and announces that she will answer two questions as Joel McHale. "Ask what he feels about Gillian Jacobs!" says McHale. ("Not a fan," says Jacobs-as-McHale.) There's a special celebration that day: The crew gets together to sing "Happy Birthday" to McHale, who offers a deadpan thank-you: "It's so great to be on *Parks & Rec*, everybody."

For Harmon, a sixth season is both a step forward and a chance to get back to the show's roots. "We wanted to recapture a look and feel of season 1," he says. "That means building a foundation of immersiveness, believing Greendale is a real place, as opposed to surrendering to the fact that it's kind of a magical place. There's no episode so far where everyone's a Roman gladiator." Season 1 of *Community* aired in 2009, an already long-ago era when Twitter was starting to take off and Nielsen reigned supreme. Harmon looks back on that time fondly. "I grew up on NBC programming," he says. "I was proud to have *Community* be one of the last members of that era. But it's also fantastic to watch it flop up on the shore of streaming TV and take its first gulps of pure Internet air."

And who knows: The show's audience could grow. "I think there are still a lot of people in America that have never heard of *Community*," says Jacobs. "Maybe they have Yahoo email addresses!" —DARREN FRANICH

BARANSKI: JIM SPELLMAN/WIREIMAGE.COM



ARYA'S *THRONES* MAKEOVER

The *Game of Thrones* heroine is set to rock a very different style—and a skirt!—in season 5

SPRING ■ *HBO*

IT'S EXTREME MAKEOVER: Westeros edition. For season 5, Arya Stark (Maisie Williams) gets her first major costume upgrade since season 1, finally ditching her raggedy threads for a lighter, more feminine ensemble. "It's very neutral, very plain, but clean," Williams says. "I have hair that actually moves." The transformation—designed by costumer Michele Clapton, who shared her sketch of the new look—helps Arya stay anonymous in the free city of Braavos as she seeks training to become an assassin. The change even fooled crew members who have worked with Williams for years. "I came onto set with my hair braided up to these big buns and bits of jewelry and a long skirt, and nobody recognized me," she says. Hopefully Arya will be able to say the same. —JAMES HIBBERD

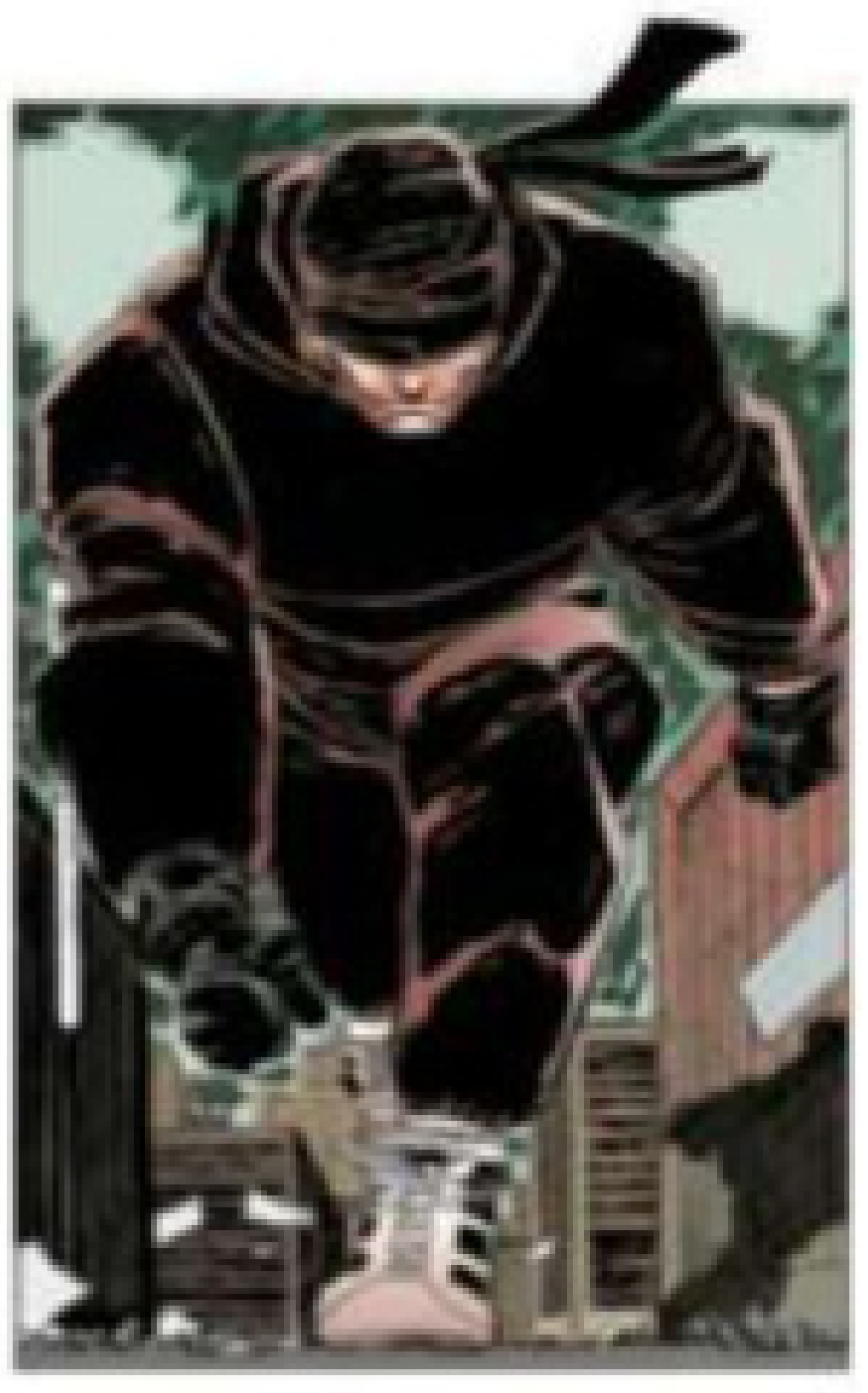
Charlie Cox as Daredevil and Matt Murdock

A MORE DARING *DEVIL*

WHEN **DAREDEVIL** LANDS ON TV, EXPECT AN EDGIER BREED OF MARVEL SUPERHERO (BUT THE RED SUIT IS STILL COMING)

TBD ■ *NETFLIX*

FORGET BEN AFFLECK. Netflix's *Daredevil* is "the exact opposite" of Affleck's much-maligned 2003 bomb, promises showrunner Steven S. DeKnight. Expect the classic origin story to remain unchanged: Blinded as a child, Matt Murdock (Charlie Cox) is a lawyer by day who hunts criminals by night (he apparently doesn't get much sleep). But this new iteration of *Daredevil*—the first of Netflix's multishow deal with Marvel that also includes *A.K.A. Jessica Jones*, *Iron Fist*, and *Luke Cage*—is more influenced by 1970s mean-street films like *The French Connection* and *Taxi Driver* than traditional superhero titles. "There aren't going to be people flying through the sky; there are no magic hammers," says Marvel TV chief Jeph Loeb. "We've always approached this as a crime drama first, superhero show second." There's also more grown-up content here. "It's a little grittier and edgier than Marvel has gone before," says DeKnight, best known for the ultra-hardcore Starz series *Spartacus*, adding, "but we're not looking to push it to extreme violence or gratuitous nudity." The 'devil *will* eventually get his iconic red costume, but first he'll wear the black duds seen here, inspired by Frank Miller's comic *Daredevil: The Man Without Fear*. For Cox, the biggest challenge was deftly navigating Murdock without using his eyes. Simple things like making breakfast and getting dressed become trickier than fighting bad guys. "Like, I put on a shirt but I can't look where the buttons are, because Daredevil wouldn't know where the buttons are, but I also can't fumble," he says. No pressure, but another thing you're not allowed to fumble: Marvel's winning streak. —JAMES HIBBERD, WITH ADDITIONAL REPORTING BY SAMANTHA HIGHFILL



DAREDEVIL: BARRY WETCHER/NETFLIX (2); COMIC: MARVEL/NETFLIX

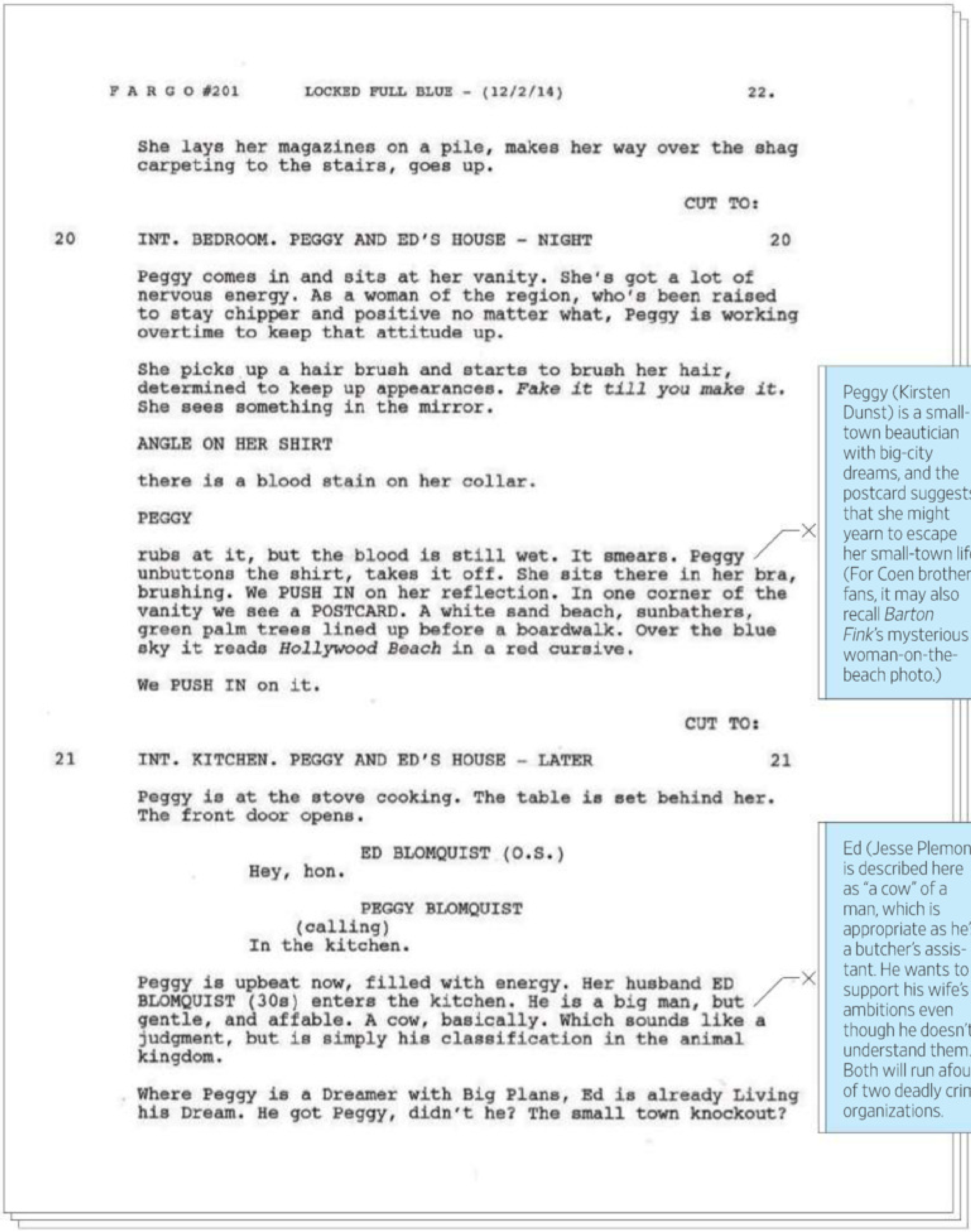
BOLD PREDICTION

No

3

Jeff Bezos will get thanked at the Emmys

With critical acclaim swarming Amazon's new series *Transparent*, Emmy noms—and at least one win—should be in the cards for the show, star Jeffrey Tambor, and creator Jill Soloway. All of whom will take a moment at the podium to acknowledge the Amazon CEO.



F A R G O #201 LOCKED FULL BLUE - (12/2/14) 22.

She lays her magazines on a pile, makes her way over the shag carpeting to the stairs, goes up.

CUT TO:

20 INT. BEDROOM. PEGGY AND ED'S HOUSE - NIGHT 20

Peggy comes in and sits at her vanity. She's got a lot of nervous energy. As a woman of the region, who's been raised to stay chipper and positive no matter what, Peggy is working overtime to keep that attitude up.

She picks up a hair brush and starts to brush her hair, determined to keep up appearances. *Fake it till you make it.* She sees something in the mirror.

ANGLE ON HER SHIRT

there is a blood stain on her collar.

PEGGY

rubs at it, but the blood is still wet. It smears. Peggy unbuttons the shirt, takes it off. She sits there in her bra, brushing. We PUSH IN on her reflection. In one corner of the vanity we see a POSTCARD. A white sand beach, sunbathers, green palm trees lined up before a boardwalk. Over the blue sky it reads *Hollywood Beach* in a red cursive.

We PUSH IN on it.

CUT TO:

21 INT. KITCHEN. PEGGY AND ED'S HOUSE - LATER 21

Peggy is at the stove cooking. The table is set behind her. The front door opens.

ED BLOMQUIST (O.S.)
Hey, hon.

PEGGY BLOMQUIST
(calling)
In the kitchen.

Peggy is upbeat now, filled with energy. Her husband ED BLOMQUIST (30s) enters the kitchen. He is a big man, but gentle, and affable. A cow, basically. Which sounds like a judgment, but is simply his classification in the animal kingdom.

Where Peggy is a Dreamer with Big Plans, Ed is already Living his Dream. He got Peggy, didn't he? The small town knockout?

Peggy (Kirsten Dunst) is a small-town beautician with big-city dreams, and the postcard suggests that she might yearn to escape her small-town life. (For Coen brothers fans, it may also recall *Barton Fink*'s mysterious woman-on-the-beach photo.)

Ed (Jesse Plemons) is described here as "a cow" of a man, which is appropriate as he's a butcher's assistant. He wants to support his wife's ambitions even though he doesn't understand them. Both will run afoul of two deadly crime organizations.

Fargo Heats Up

FX'S HIT DRAMA RETURNS WITH A NEW SETTING, NEW STARS, AND MORE MURDER

FALL ■ *FX*

Jesse Plemons and Kirsten Dunst

FARGO IS GOING back in time to 1979 for season 2, but showrunner Noah Hawley assures it's "not the '70s in a *Boogie Nights* kind of way." Expect another snow-swept rural crime drama loosely inspired by the Coen brothers' film, only this time the action is set in Luverne, Minn., where humble married couple Peggy and Ed Blomquist (Kirsten Dunst and Jesse Plemons) find themselves caught in an escalating war between a local crime gang and a major Mob syndicate. (A character in season 1 cryptically described the 1979 case as "savagery, pure and simple," with a massive pileup of bodies.) "The scope of the storytelling this season is a lot bigger, it has more of an epic feel to it," says Hawley, who adds that the earlier time period and even more rural setting give the show an almost Western-like quality. "We started calling it *No Country for Old Fargo*." The script page above is an excerpt from a scene that occurs halfway into the season 2 premiere, featuring Peggy and Ed—and a mysterious bloodstain. —JAMES HIBBERD

PLEMONS: CHRISTOPHER POLK/WIREIMAGE; DUNST: RICH POLK/GETTY IMAGES

FIRST THERE WAS STEWART. THEN CAME COLBERT. NOW MEET LARRY WILMORE. *(NO PRESSURE, LARRY.)*

A COMEDY UNDERDOG TAKES OVER WITH **THE NIGHTLY SHOW**

JAN **19** ■ *COMEDY CENTRAL*

RIGHT NOW, AMERICA REALLY NEEDS a senior black correspondent. That was Larry Wilmore's title on *The Daily Show*, and it was meant to be funny, but in a year when the news cycle started with Donald Sterling and ended with Eric Garner, it doesn't really feel like a joke.

In 2015 Wilmore will have a new title: host of Comedy Central's late-night talk show *The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore*. So it's his job to write jokes about the very things that some people don't find funny. In the weeks leading up to the premiere, protesters gathered in the streets of New York, holding up signs that called for an end to police brutality, and Wilmore found himself debating with his own staff writers about whether the demonstrations were effective. During the civil rights movement of the 1960s, he says, protests were geared toward changing segregation laws. Now it's hard to say what the goals are. "Are you trying to say, 'We don't want cops to be racist'?" Wilmore, 53, asks as he recounts the story to EW. "Well, okay. How long you gonna march for that? Good luck!" The discussion gives way to a possible *Nightly Show* bit: Wilmore would introduce his guests, a white cop and a black commentator. When the camera cut back to the cop, he'd already have the black guy in a choke hold.

In the past Wilmore might've delivered that joke to a mostly white audience. "Three black people watch *The Daily Show* at any given time," he quips. "So if I'm watching it, that counts, and there's only two left." No matter who's watching, though, that audience needs him. Wilmore jokes, "I couldn't have started the show at a better worse time."

PETER YANG

Formerly called *The Minority Report*, until confusion with a similarly titled Fox pilot nixed it, *The Nightly Show* debuts after *The Daily Show* on Jan. 19, which happens to be Martin Luther King Jr. Day. (Wilmore already has his first joke: "Yeah, I gotta work. *I know!*") Stewart, who will exec-produce the show alongside its host, came up with the concept, a panel discussion that focuses on underrepresented points of view, including minorities, women, and other voices you don't normally hear on late-night television. He pitched it to Comedy Central with Wilmore in mind. "You know how some people just always seem sophisticated?" Stewart asks EW. "There's certain times you watch an actor and you're like, *Was Karl Malden ever young?* I think with Larry, there's just this sense of *Was he ever a goofball?* I don't think so. He has a wonderful ability to be the grown-up in the room."

Wilmore says that's always been the case. "When I was a kid, people used to call me the Professor, so that gives you a little insight," he says. "I wore glasses. I wanted to be an astronaut." He was just a regular nerd. And yet, as one of only two black students in his class at his Catholic high school in La Verne, Calif., he felt like a representative for his race. "We were all fiery about it," he remembers. "I'd come to school with a big Afro just to see what the priests would do. We had a dean of discipline who'd say"—he adopts an Irish accent with eerie precision—"'Mr. Wilmore, you're going to have to cut your hair.' And I'd say, 'Well, Father, technically the rules say it can't go down over your ears.'"

LARRY WILMORE
SENIOR BLACK CORRESPONDENT

Wilmore on the set of *black-ish* and on *The Daily Show With Jon Stewart*

Looking back, he believes his Catholic upbringing helped shape his voice as a comedian. "That boisterous style [of black comedy], a lot of it grows out of the black church," he says. "It's that preachy style, like, *Lemme tell you the truth!* But Catholics, we're quiet. It's about being guilty, so the lifestyle is naturally more introspective. I didn't have that fire-and-brimstone voice. I thought I was going to die from doing the wrong thing!"

From the beginning Wilmore was aware he was a very different type of comic. Early on in his career as a stand-up comedian in the '80s, he didn't quite fit in with the raunchier style that was becoming popular. And as an actor, he didn't fit the usual black role that casting directors were looking to fill. "If you were from the ghetto, that was good—'urban' is what they call it," he says. "And so that wasn't me."

When he couldn't get an audition for *In Living Color*, he applied for a job as a writer. They hired him. Eventually, he wrote for *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*, co-created the animated series *The PJs* with Eddie Murphy, and won an Emmy as creator of *The Bernie Mac Show*. Just this fall, he was the showrunner for ABC's family comedy *black-ish*, where he found himself in the awkward position of explaining what "the nod" is to white executives. (He helped develop its first dozen episodes before leaving for his own show.) Currently, he's working on a new series with Issa Rae, creator of the YouTube show *The Misadventures of Awkward Black Girl*.

But one of Wilmore's goals had always been to host his own show. Back in 2006, in fact, he called a meeting with his manager and mapped out his career. "I said, 'I need a platform,'" Wilmore recalls. Accepting the *Daily Show* gig was a big part of that. While he wrote, he also took small parts on *Happy Endings*, *How I Met Your Mother*, and *The Office*, where he played Dunder Mifflin's diversity consultant. For the next eight years, he moderated panel discussions that nobody even knew about, just to polish his skills as a host. "A lot of that was eating humble pie," he says, "but there was a plan."

The plan worked. For *The Nightly Show*, he has staffed the writers' room with funny people who complement his more offbeat sensibility, including Robin Thede (*Real Husbands of Hollywood*), the only black woman currently serving as a head writer on a major late-night show, and Jordan Carlos, who played Stephen Colbert's "black friend" on *The Colbert Report*. It's a room of people who might appreciate a good choke-hold joke. "Surreal moments like that—that's how ridiculous my mind is," Wilmore says. But maybe that's a good thing. In the middle of his conversation with EW, a young man interrupts to tell Wilmore he's a big fan. "I'm hearing so much from people who are excited for me," Wilmore says. "You know, I'm walking down the street, and someone says, 'Good luck on your new job!' What stranger says, 'Good luck on your new job'? That doesn't even make sense! It's like, 'Hey, Larry, I heard you got a new house!'"—he gives a thumbs-up sign—"I'm a fan of back porches!"

Maybe the public just senses that he's the voice we need, an absurdist trying to make sense of the world. Asked if he ever gets tired of having to school white people about race, he turns serious. "I really don't look at it like schooling people," he says. "I look at it like this: White or black, the universe is upside down. And here I am, explaining it." —MELISSA MAERZ

BLACK-ISH: GREG GAYNE/ABC; *THE DAILY SHOW WITH JON STEWART*: COMEDY CENTRAL

MAD MEN'S LAST CALL

ALL WE KNOW FOR SURE ABOUT THIS SEASON OF **MAD MEN** IS THAT IT'S THE FINAL ONE—AND OUR BEST HOPE FOR DON'S SALVATION

SPRING ■ *AMC*

WHO IS DON DRAPER? We've been asking ourselves that question for nearly seven full seasons, and yet, as *Mad Men* heads into its final stretch, he remains a mystery. It is unlikely we'll receive some key in the final seven episodes to unlock the safe that holds Don's secret heart—whether that heart is a pair of dog tags or a Hershey bar. But we might get the answer to a more important question: Can Don Draper, whoever he is, be saved? Or will he stay mired in purgatory with a nice view of downtown?

In the first half of this split season, Don returns to Sterling Cooper just in time for the company's buyout by McCann-Erickson. Now more than ever, Don's creative passion, his primary existential purpose beyond drinking and adultery, seems more like a hamster wheel than a road to fulfillment. If he hopes to assemble some bit of meaning and happiness, he'd be better off listening to the advice of the soft-shoeing specter of Bert Cooper: The best things in life are free. In the end, Don's soul is largely in the hands of his daughter. Sally has always been the one whose opinion matters, and who is probably the closest to seeing Don for what he really is.

For all we know, the final episodes will pole-vault the show into the 1980s, rendering our assumptions moot. But there are plenty of questions left: Will Peggy continue to curdle? What is the ultimate fate of SC&P? How long will Pete's sideburns get? And, at the end of Don's long title-sequence free fall, will there be anything for him to land on? —KEITH STASKIEWICZ

Tatiana Maslany and Ari Millen

Orphan's New Clone

*When **Orphan Black** returns for its third season, Tatiana Maslany will be facing off against some new clones...who for once don't share her face*

APRIL **18** ■ *BBC AMERICA*

IT'S A MEETING OF THE MINDS—or, rather, a meeting of the clones—when *Orphan Black* returns for season 3 (simultaneously airing on Space in Canada). In this exclusive first-look image, we see Sarah Manning (Tatiana Maslany) coming face-to-face with one of the male clones of Project Castor unveiled in last season's finale. And he now has a name: Rudy (played by newcomer Ari Millen). "That scene is what we like to call clone speed dating," jokes co-creator Graeme Manson. Clever, but what does the male cloning project mean for Sarah and her genetic twins? Therein lies the crux of season 3. "The threat that these guys pose—will it bring Sarah and her sisters together, or will it break the bonds?" says Manson. "Sarah is the linchpin. So whatever more she understands about these Castor boys, she understands more about herself and her sisters and their origin story."

As for what else to expect, Manson reveals that in season 3 things will pick up right where they left off. "Being *Orphan Black*, we hit the ground running," he says. "No six months go by." That means Cosima (also Maslany) is still sick, and Rachel (yes, Maslany once again) has that whole pencil-sticking-out-of-her-eye thing to deal with. Teases Manson, "The main question for Rachel is, How deep did that pencil go?" (Our answer: not far enough.) —DALTON ROSS

GLASS: ART STREIBER; *ORPHAN BLACK*: STEVE WILKIE/BBC AMERICA

BREAKING BIG

ISSA RAE

With smart, ambitious black women underrepresented in the media, Issa Rae created a Web series, a TV show, and a book featuring one of them: herself

The Misadventures of Awkward Black Girl FEB **10** ■ *MEMOIR* | **Untitled Pilot** TBD ■ *HBO*

"WOW. I'M AN AWKWARD-ASS BLACK GIRL." Issa Rae had that realization in 2009. She had recently graduated from Stanford and moved to New York, where she was struggling to pitch her college Web series *Dorm Diaries* to networks such as MTV while paying the bills with work at a theater nonprofit and freelance film-editing gigs. At events, she would often hover in the corner, too shy to talk to anyone. "In the media, black people are portrayed as either cool or dramatic—they have these big personalities," says Rae, 29. "To be black in America and not even get to be a purveyor of cool is literally like you're losing at life.... You're not even using black to your advantage!"

These days, Rae must be doing something right. After channeling her feelings into a Web series called *The Misadventures of Awkward Black Girl*, which has more than 20 million views, she's now releasing a memoir of the same name (out in February) and developing her own HBO comedy series. "I call her the future Oprah," says the show's executive producer Larry Wilmore, who produced ABC's *black-ish* and is about to launch his own *Daily Show* spin-off, *The Nightly Show*. "I always think she's starting five businesses at the same time."

As a kid growing up in Maryland and Los Angeles, Rae rarely fit in. In middle school, she was ostracized for not knowing anything about Tupac (or "Two-Pack," as she pronounced it). She looked to shows such as *The Cosby Show* and *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air* and movies like *Love & Basketball* for relatable images of people of color. In her memoir, Rae writes, "*A Different World* made me want to go to college, talk about smart-black-people stuff, and find my own Dwayne Wayne." But after the '90s, Rae watched those nuanced portrayals of African-Americans fade away to make room for reality shows like *Flavor of Love*. "It's *so* weird, we just fell off the face of the earth!" she says. "[Reality] did not need to be the only route for a woman of color to get on TV."

By 2011 Rae was living in Los Angeles, working a day job at the March of Dimes while still dreaming of a career in entertainment. This was before Shonda Rhimes took over Thursday nights, and Rae still wasn't seeing many black leads on the shows she loved, including *The Office* and *Curb Your Enthusiasm*. "I thought, 'Let me do my part instead of just complaining,'" says Rae. So using her modest March of Dimes paycheck, she filmed and starred on *The Misadventures of Awkward Black Girl*, based on an idea she'd conceived years earlier in New York. The series follows J, an introverted heroine who deals with interracial relationships, ignorant co-workers, comments about her natural hair, and other issues drawn from Rae's real-life observations. Its low production values aside, *Awkward Black Girl* found an audience immediately. "The timing was right," Rae says. "Whether it was good or not, people were going to recognize it as an alternative to what was on television." Early on, Rae turned to Kickstarter to raise $30,000 for the show; after a month, she had raised nearly $60,000. "That was the defining moment," she says. "It was such validation."

> *"TO NOT BE REPRESENTED ON TV IS TO NOT BE REPRESENTED IN AMERICA."*
>
> **ISSA RAE**

More validation came rolling in. Pharrell ("He is 100 percent an Awkward Black Guy!" Rae says) helped produce the second season, and in 2012 Rae teamed up with Rhimes' Shondaland to develop a pilot for ABC called *I Hate L.A. Dudes*. It was never produced, but the project taught Rae about the challenges of working in straitlaced network TV. "I just couldn't fit that formula," she says. "I didn't want to mess up my shot [at success], so I'd take notes from the network even when they didn't make any sense to me."

Despite her huge online presence, Rae continues to set her sights on traditional TV. "Audiences still hold television on a pedestal," she says. "To not be represented on TV is to not be represented or acknowledged in America." Her latest venture, ColorCreative.tv, produces pilots by underrepresented writers who want to avoid the conventional process. "There's too much of an old-boys' network that exists in Hollywood, so it's a way to say, 'Look! Pay attention to them, too,'" says Rae. "[Web] audiences put me on the radar, so I want to do the same for these writers."

For Rae, her best chance to break through on television in 2015 is with her HBO pilot, which she's currently revising. Loosely autobiographical, it centers on a 29-year-old woman who works in nonprofit by day but aspires to be a rapper by night. If her memoir finds an audience and the pilot makes it to series, Rae is well aware that, like *Girls* creator Lena Dunham, she'll be expected to represent a demographic, and might even be labeled the voice of African-American women of her generation. "If people relate to my experiences, that's great. If they don't, that's great. But I will never claim to represent a whole group of people," Rae says. "After a while, you just want to be yourself." —STEPHAN LEE

CHRISTOPHER DIBBLE/CPI SYNDICATION

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IS
FOR
AWKWARD

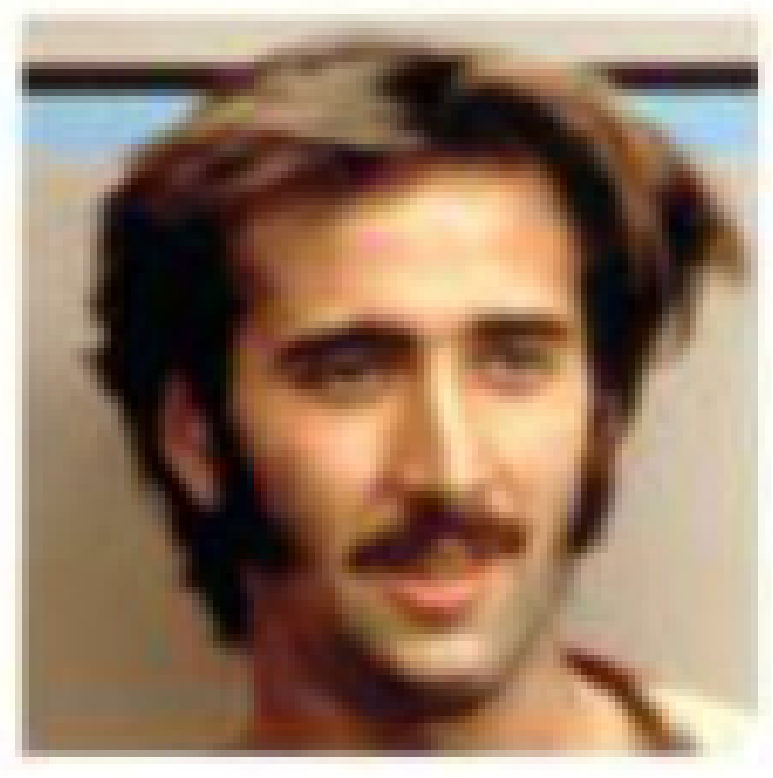
HOW THE *LEGO* GUYS BUILT *EARTH*

THE LEGO MOVIE AND *22 JUMP STREET* DIRECTORS PHIL LORD AND CHRIS MILLER SPILL THEIR INSPIRATIONS FOR THEIR NEW FOX SITCOM, **THE LAST MAN ON EARTH**

MARCH **1** ■ *FOX*

THIS YEAR, DIRECTORS PHIL LORD AND CHRIS MILLER unloaded a double-barreled blast of pop-culture-laced hilarity with *The LEGO Movie* and *22 Jump Street*, films with gags upon gags spittooned out with the breakneck pace and meta-awareness of a Chuck Jones cartoon. A *LEGO* sequel is in the works—"I can tell you, there is a kind of *Mad Max* flavor to that one," says Lord—but first they'll tackle the Fox series *The Last Man on Earth*. Will Forte, who created the show, stars as the final XY-chromosome carrier in a postapocalyptic Tucson, Ariz. "There's a craziness to it," says Miller, who executive-produces and directed the pilot alongside Lord. "But it's emotionally grounded, and it's unlike anything else you've ever seen." We asked the dynamic duo to share some of their many inspirations for the show. —KEITH STASKIEWICZ

Will Forte on *The Last Man on Earth*



RAISING ARIZONA

It's not just the Arizona setting that Lord and Miller borrowed from Joel and Ethan Coen's brilliantly harebrained comedy starring Nicolas Cage as a hopeless recidivist and baby-napper. "It's a touch point for us in terms of the tone, the pace, and the oddity of it," explains Lord.

CAST AWAY

When it comes to depicting one man's utter solitude, 2000's *Cast Away* is an obvious reference point "for its appreciation of one's descent into madness," says Lord. Does that mean Forte might befriend some sporting goods? "If you like inanimate companions, you're going to love this show."

THE OMEGA MAN

The Last Man on Earth also happens to be the name of a classic Vincent Price movie based on Richard Matheson's oft-adapted novel *I Am Legend*. But it's neither that film nor the Will Smith vehicle released decades later that stuck with the directors, but rather the 1971 version starring Charlton Heston as a survivor fighting a post-human society of mutants. "I'm a big *Omega Man* fan," says Lord, "because of how insane he seems, just driving around in that car really fast. It has, like, a very strange tone to it."

LORD AND MILLER: JASON MERRITT/GETTY IMAGES; *THE LAST MAN ON EARTH*: JORDIN ALTHAUS/FOX; *RAISING ARIZONA*: 20TH CENTURY FOX/EVERETT COLLECTION; *CAST AWAY*: ZADE ROSENTHAL; *THE OMEGA MAN*: EVERETT COLLECTION

LIFE AFTER PEOPLE

The History channel's series was a haunting imagining of what the earth will look like if—or, to be honest, when—humanity finally gets shrugged off this big blue marble. The show's staying power comes from how strangely beautiful it is to see the ruins of modernity being swallowed up by flora and fauna—and that's something Miller and Lord hope *Last Man* will capture in the long run. "One of the things we talked about very early on was how everything's dead," says Miller. "But by episode 100, you might start seeing everything grow back. We've always thought of it as an interesting arc for the series, that the world might get better after a certain point."

BOLD PREDICTION

Nº

4

NBC will reboot Friends

With sitcoms bombing left and right (*Mulaney*, *A to Z*), NBC will return to the tried-and-true brand of six pals living, dating, and drinking coffee in New York. Gunther will guest-star in an episode. Jennifer Aniston will not.

WILL FORTE

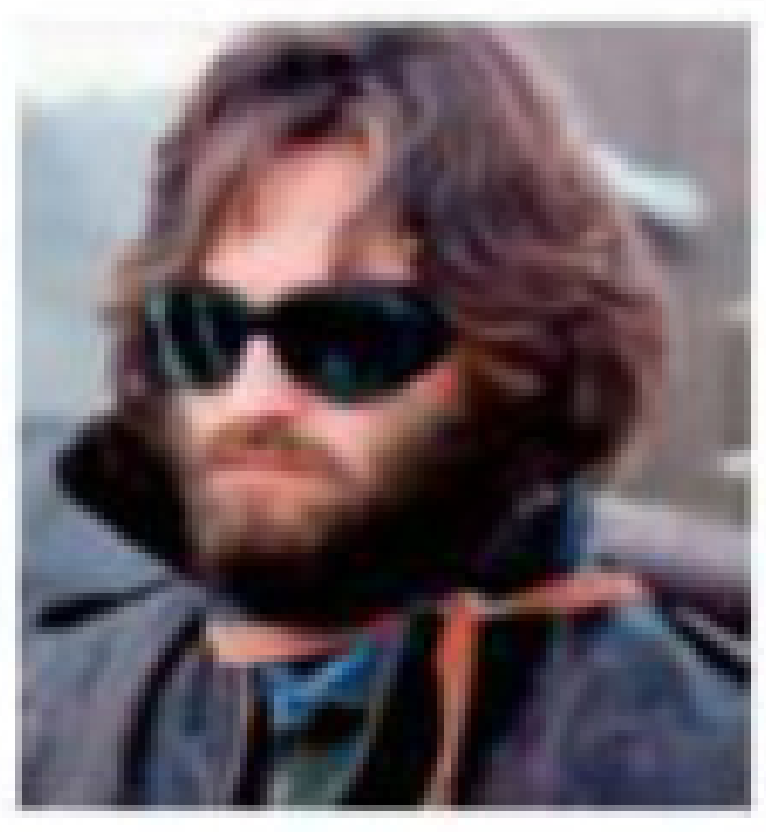
Obviously the pair's biggest inspiration for the series is the creator and star of *The Last Man on Earth*, Forte. They first worked with the comedian more than a decade ago when he lent his voice to Lord and Miller's short-lived cult animated MTV series *Clone High* (he voiced teenage Abe Lincoln), and they knew they would want to work with the *SNL* alum again. "So much of Will's talent is about taking the audience to a very extreme place, and usually, with a character who has a lot of quiet desperation," says Lord. "And that's exactly what he does here."

BUSTER KEATON

If you're looking for tips on physical comedy, you can't do better than the Great Stone Face, who similarly battled the elements in movies like *Steamboat Bill, Jr.* and *Our Hospitality*. And with *Last Man*'s world so empty, the show can't exactly rely on dialogue. "Will is, I think, the best silent comedian since Keaton," says Lord. "He's got those eyes that are so soulful, and empathetic, and we wanted to use him to do a lot of visual humor that you don't get to see from television all the time."

TALKING HEADS' "(NOTHING BUT) FLOWERS"

The 1988 Talking Heads song is a postapocalyptic ballad, but this one mourns the loss of Pizza Huts and 7-Elevens once nature has reclaimed those relics of humanity's consumerism. "It's kind of got a Randy Newman flavor," says Miller, "where it's, you know, from the perspective of somebody who's living after the world's ended, and he hates all of the trees and grass that's grown back, and misses the old world."



KURT RUSSELL'S BEARD

Forte's bushy beard is one of impressive magnitude, and for that they turned to Russell's paragon of facial hair in John Carpenter's *The Thing*. "Right now it looks kind of like an 1890s prospector," says Miller. "It's wider than it is long."

CATCH-22

One thing *Last Man* won't have? Extras wandering around in the background. "In *Catch-22*, Mike Nichols took all the extras out and it has this really strange feeling," says Lord. "You realize, Oh, gosh, I'm used to seeing the mailman walk through this shot."

LIFE AFTER PEOPLE: HISTORY CHANNEL; FORTE: JORDIN ALTHAUS/FOX; KEATON: COURTESY OF ROBERT ARKUS; TALKING HEADS: GLENN A. BAKER/REDFERNS/RETNA; RUSSELL: UNIVERSAL/THE KOBAL COLLECTION

MY 2015

"I WATCH A LOT OF TELEVISION, SO I HAVE A WHOLE SLATE OF PROGRAMMING I LOVE THE SHOW GIRLS, *AND I LOVE THAT SHOW IS A TESTAMENT TO THAT. AND* STAR WARS, *OF COURSE I'M THAT'S THE END OF NEXT YEAR, BUT ANTICIPATION*

HBO BETS BIG ON *WESTWORLD*

THE DIRECTOR OF *STAR TREK*, THE WRITER OF *INTERSTELLAR*, AND THE NETWORK BEHIND *GAME OF THRONES* HEAD TO A BRAVE NEW **WESTWORLD** OF SCI-FI TV

TBD ■ *HBO*

COMBINE THE TACTILE IMMERSION of Disneyland, the virtual-universe-building of *World of Warcraft*, and the sinful indulgence of Las Vegas—and you're still nowhere close to the wild, futuristic theme park of HBO's *Westworld*. Inspired by Michael Crichton's classic 1973 film about androids run amok in a high-tech tourist destination, the show—executive-produced by Jonathan Nolan (*Interstellar*) and J.J. Abrams (everything awesome)—has lured marquee stars (Anthony Hopkins, Evan Rachel Wood, and Ed Harris) with a dark look at the consequences of our exponentially advancing technology. "It's a place where you can be whoever you want to be and there are no consequences—no rules, no limitations," Nolan says. "What happens in Westworld stays in Westworld." Including the plot: Details remain under wraps, but expect Hopkins to play the park's brilliant creative visionary and Harris to portray a twist on the killer robot gunslinger made famous in the film by Yul Brynner. "It's sci-fi but mashed up with a Western," says co-creator Lisa Joy. "We get to look backward and forward." But not as far forward as you might think—the future-shock ideas in the script are largely based on technology that is rapidly becoming more science than fiction. "What we can tell you is that we intend to make the most ambitious, subversive, f---ed-up television series," says Nolan. "The things that keep you up at night, any of those things that trouble you—that is exactly what the show is about." Finally, a show about my DVR running out of space. —JAMES HIBBERD

Ingrid Bolsø Berdal

THAT I LOOK FORWARD TO.
BROAD CITY. *I LIKE FUNNY LADIES. I THINK MY DATING HISTORY*
LOOKING FORWARD TO THAT.
STARTS NOW, AND WELL IT SHOULD." —JIMMY KIMMEL

Bruce Campbell in *Evil Dead II*

Evil Dead Lives Again

SAM RAIMI'S HORROR FRANCHISE IS GETTING A TV SHOW, **ASH VS. EVIL DEAD**, AND BRUCE CAMPBELL IS ALONG FOR THE RIDE

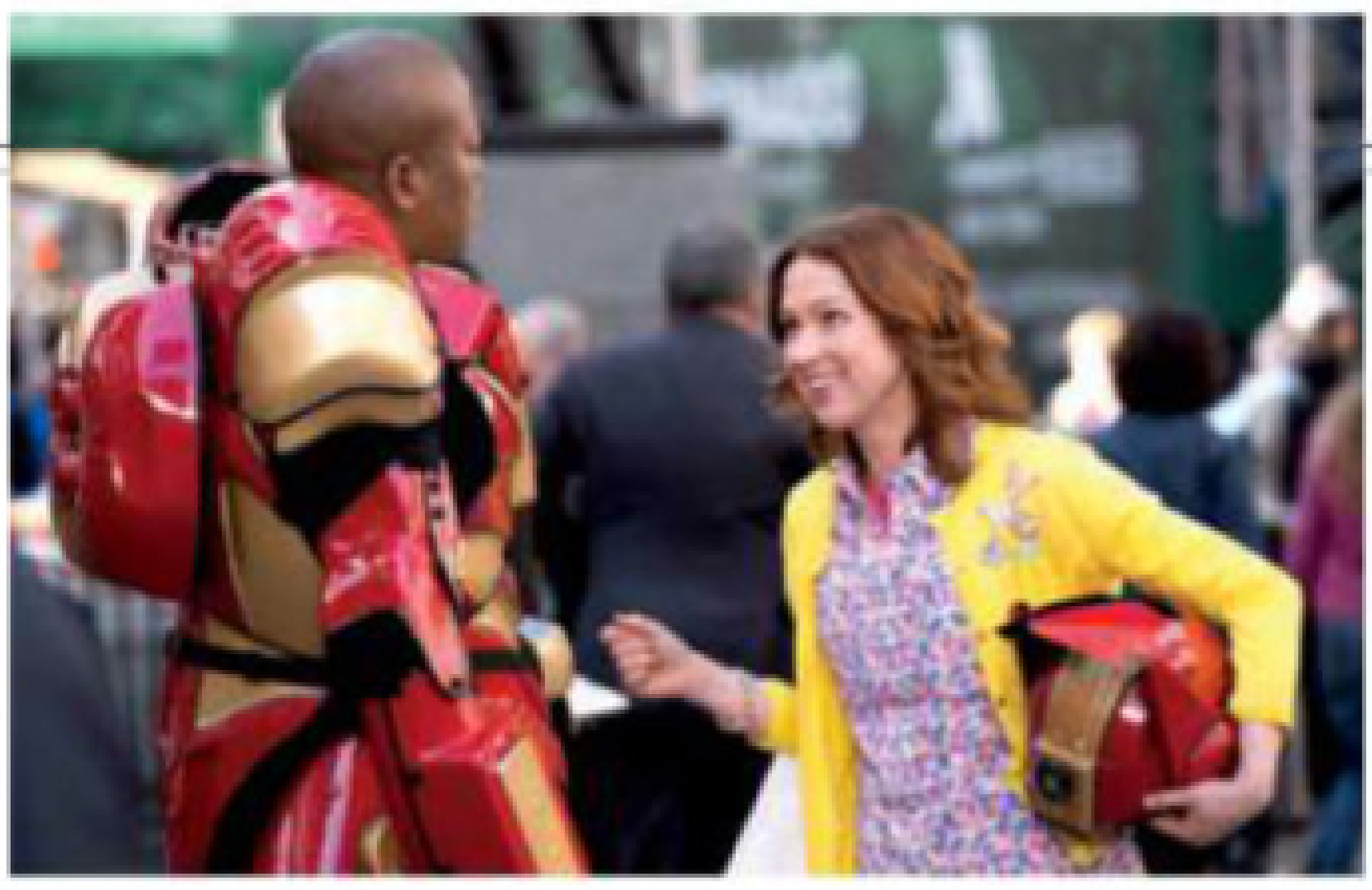
TBD ■ *STARZ*

IT TOOK 23 YEARS, but Bruce Campbell is finally returning to his iconic role of Ash—the arrogant, loudmouthed one-handed badass who squared off against prankish possessive spirits across three Sam Raimi films (including 1987's cult classic *Evil Dead II*). Starz is resurrecting the franchise with *Ash vs. Evil Dead*, a half-hour horror-comedy where Ash takes a road trip to banish his demons alongside two young helpers and his trusty boomstick. To find out what we can expect, EW talked to the king (who is also serving as executive producer this time around) himself.

What finally made this happen?
"We realized if we made another movie, frankly, it would probably be too expensive. But in the format of a TV show, we could give people exactly what they wanted and expand the character and the story even more. And we never burned *Evil Dead* as a franchise out—it's not like we did 13 of these movies. So we felt like, what the heck, let's give it a try. *Walking Dead* is *Walking Dead*, but we were kind of first. The [fan reaction to the 2013 *Evil Dead* remake] was all 'Yeah, yeah, that was nice, fellas, but we still want the real deal.' This is it."

How is Ash different this time?
"Ash has survivor's guilt. You could have a [field day] with his PTSD. He's a war vet. He doesn't want to talk about it, and he'll lie about that stump on his hand to impress the ladies. That's what I look forward to playing—a guy with horrible flaws. In *Army of Darkness* he can't memorize three words and he's responsible for the death of a hundred people—this is your lead character! But he's the guy you want in the foxhole next to you. People are like, 'Why don't you want to be in *The Expendables*?' I'm like, 'So I can have one line of dialogue every 10 minutes?'—'Duck!' 'Get down!' That's not my idea of a good time."

It's an intensely physical role. Is there anything you're doing to prepare?
"It's probably about doing a lot of stretching. And my stuntman will probably be spectacular—this guy's going to wish his mother never met his father. Over the years we've learned a lot of tricks about how to do fights without killing your lead actor, and I plan to use every trick in the book." —JAMES HIBBERD



Tituss Burgess and Ellie Kemper

The New *30 Rock?*

30 Rock *masterminds Tina Fey and Robert Carlock reteam for* ***Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt***

MARCH ■ *NETFLIX*

HEY, NERDS! Guess what's got two *30 Rock* executive producers, a gay Times Square robot, and at least one character with an unpronounceable name. That'd be Tina Fey and Robert Carlock's latest, which follows the titular Kimmy (*The Office*'s Ellie Kemper) as she escapes from a doomsday cult and heads to New York, where she moves in with an aspiring singer who moonlights as said robot (Tituss Burgess) and starts working as a nanny for a girl named Xanthippe (Dylan Gelula). *Kimmy* itself is also stepping into a brave new world: The series was developed for NBC but will debut and live at the home of *House of Cards*. "It belongs on Netflix," says Carlock. "It has a little edge to it." The show kinda-sorta looks like a spiritual successor to Fey and Carlock's previous collaboration: It features *30 Rock* star Jane Krakowski as Kimmy's new boss, while die-hard fans may remember Burgess as *Queen of Jordan* sidekick D'Fwan. Fey won't say if she is planning to make a cameo—but she says there'll be one easy way to find out, thanks to Netflix: "Fast-forward through all of them and see if I appear." —HILLARY BUSIS

(THIS SPREAD) *WESTWORLD*: JOHN P. JOHNSON/HBO; KIMMEL: MICHAEL TRAN/FILMMAGIC.COM; *EVIL DEAD II*: EVERETT COLLECTION; *UNBREAKABLE KIMMY SCHMIDT*: ERIC LIEBOWITZ/NBC

2015 PREVIEW

8 More Shows

MUSIC-PACKED DRAMAS, OLD-SCHOOL COMEDIES, AND BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH—HERE ARE THE OTHER SERIES WE CAN'T WAIT TO WATCH IN 2015

Bob Odenkirk

BETTER CALL SAUL

FEB **8** ■ *AMC*

If you couldn't get enough of Saul Goodman on *Breaking Bad*, we've got good news: Your favorite shady lawyer, né Jimmy McGill (Bob Odenkirk), steps into the spotlight on this prequel series. "We always loved Saul Goodman's lightning wit, his energy, and his epic problem-solving ability," says co-creator Peter Gould. But this isn't a continuation of the acclaimed drug drama. "There's a lot of tone, style choices, tension, and atmosphere of *Breaking Bad*, but otherwise it's just its own thing," says Odenkirk, whose costars include Jonathan Banks (back as fixer Mike) and Michael McKean (as Jimmy's older brother, Chuck). "The only thing that ties them together is [the theme of] transformation." —DAN SNIERSON

Jussie Smollett and Taraji P. Henson

EMPIRE

JAN **7** ■ *FOX*

This musical soap stars Terrence Howard as a hip-hop impresario with ALS who must pick one of his three sons to inherit his business—all while battling his ex-con ex-wife (Taraji P. Henson), who wants half of the company. Created by Lee Daniels (*Precious*) and screenwriter Danny Strong (*Game Change*) and featuring new songs by super-producer Timbaland, *Empire* has no shortage of talent—or ambition. "I call it *Dynasty* meets *The Sopranos* meets *Glee*," says Henson. —TIM STACK

Billy Crystal and Josh Gad

THE COMEDIANS

APRIL ■ *FX*

Billy Crystal and Josh Gad play perfectly to type on this meta-comedy, since they play, well, themselves. The old-school star begrudgingly teams up with the younger comedian for a sketch series, and a documentary crew captures their journey, which mines laughs from the cavernous generation gap. "He's got his guard up, and it's about me trying to get his guard down," says Gad. "Sometimes he's the windshield and I'm the fly—and sometimes I'm the windshield and he's a giant wasp." —DAN SNIERSON

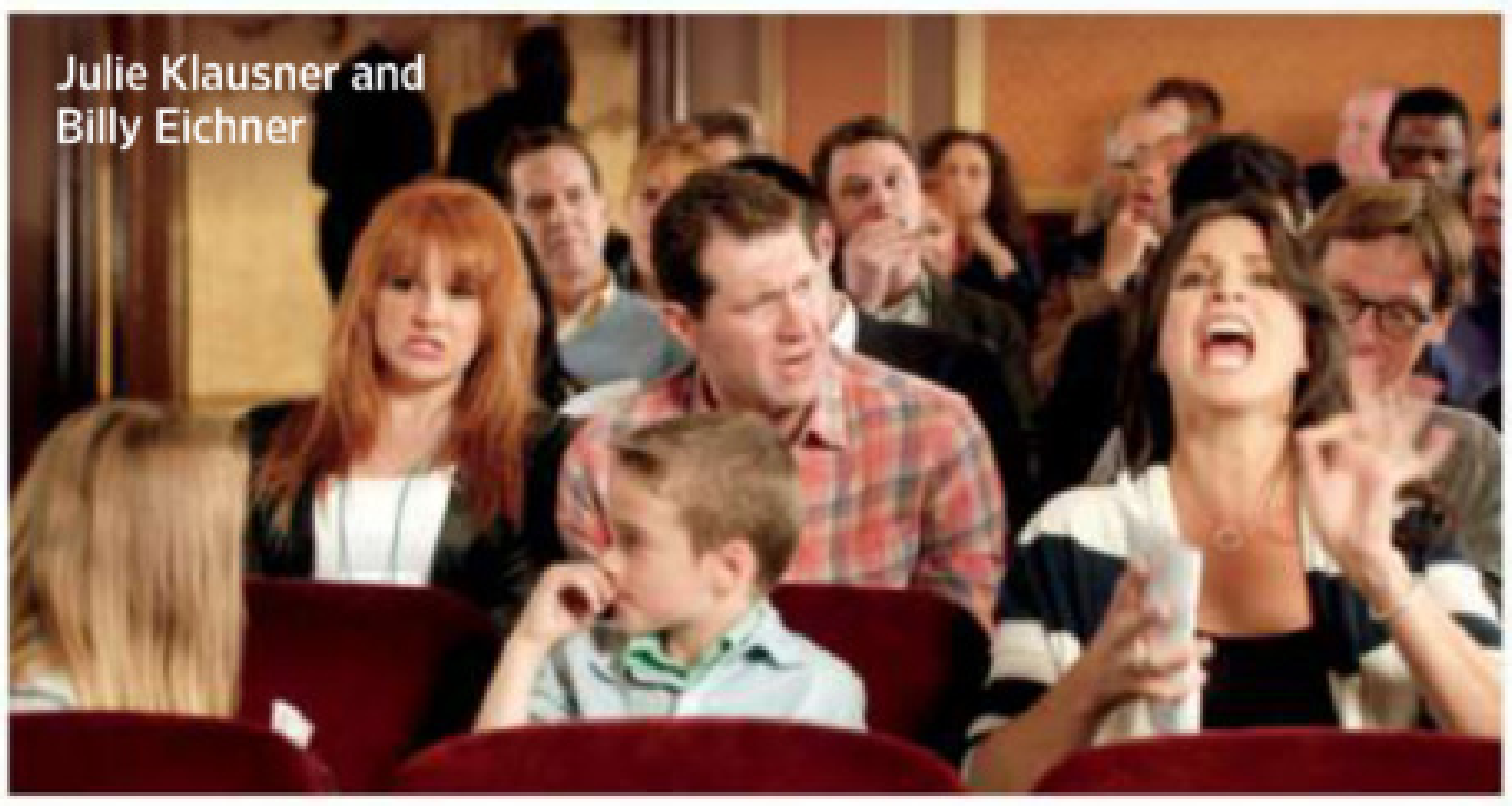
BETTER CALL SAUL: BEN LEUNER/AMC; *EMPIRE*: CHUCK HODES/FOX; *THE COMEDIANS*: RAY MICKSHAW/FX

Denis Leary

SEX & DRUGS & ROCK & ROLL

SUMMER ■ *FX*

Denis Leary's new comedy takes place in the high-flying music world, but the elements stay grounded. "It's about a dysfunctional family that happens to be a rock band," says the creator, who plays a burned-out frontman who reunites his old group, which is based on an amalgam of musicians Leary ran with in the '70s. It promises to be much breezier than the star's previous FX show, *Rescue Me*. "There's drama in this show, but we're out to make people laugh their balls off," says Leary. —KYLE ANDERSON



Julie Klausner and Billy Eichner

DIFFICULT PEOPLE

TBD ■ *HULU*

Billy on the Street's Billy Eichner is taking Manhattan again. He and Julie Klausner star on an Amy Poehler-produced comedy about two bitter BFFs struggling on the writer-performer circuit. "Billy and I very much wanted to do a version of *Will & Grace*," says creator Klausner, "but if they were unlikable." Adds Eichner: "One thing they don't like to do is lie. Even for the sake of getting a joke. If being polite and making sure everyone likes you is not a priority, *that's* going to get you into trouble." —DAN SNIERSON

Benedict Cumberbatch and Martin Freeman

SHERLOCK

TBD ■ *PBS*

Given the hectic schedules of stars Benedict Cumberbatch and Martin Freeman, it came as a shock when the *Sherlock* team announced filming would start in January for a special—to air on PBS' *Masterpiece* during the 2015 season—followed by a full fourth batch. "We've got a really cool and surprising idea," says executive producer Steven Moffat. Can he say if it involves Sherlock's archfoe, Moriarty (Andrew Scott), as teased last season? "I could—but I'm not gonna!" —CLARK COLLIS

Lili Taylor and Felicity Huffman

AMERICAN CRIME

MARCH **5** ■ *ABC*

The 11-part anthology series follows the investigation and trial surrounding the murder of a California vet (Felicity Huffman and Timothy Hutton play the victim's parents) from start to finish. Instead of *Law & Order*-style twists, Oscar-winning screenwriter John Ridley (*12 Years a Slave*) is aiming to deliver an emotional punch. "It's not meant to be a straight-up procedural," he says. "It isn't about answering questions as much as posing questions." —KEVIN P. SULLIVAN

Rachel McAdams

True Detective

SUMMER ■ *HBO*

Colin Farrell, Vince Vaughn, and Rachel McAdams step into the hotly anticipated season 2 as the setting shifts to California for a crime story reminiscent of a modern-day *Chinatown*: A trio of cops are assigned to solve the death of a corrupt city official involved with a major transportation initiative. We've said it for years—traffic in L.A. is *murder*. —JAMES HIBBERD

SEX & DRUGS & ROCK & ROLL: PATRICK HARBRON/FX; *DIFFICULT PEOPLE*: HULU; *SHERLOCK*: COLIN HUTTON/BBC; *AMERICAN CRIME*: FELICIA GRAHAM/ABC; RACHEL MCADAMS: GEORGE PIMENTEL/WIREIMAGE.COM

2015

PREVIEW

MUSIC

THE BIGGEST **STARS**—AND THE ONES YOU HAVEN'T MET YET

TREND ALERT

Rita Ora: Leading the New Brit Invasion

THE BRITISH ARE COMING! AGAIN. **U.K. ARTISTS** HAVE ALWAYS CROSSED OVER, BUT A CONSTANTLY EVOLVING MEDIA LANDSCAPE IS CHANGING THE WAY THE LATEST WAVE IS CRASHING IN.

RITA ORA KNOWS EXACTLY where she stands. The 24-year-old has racked up four No. 1 singles from her chart-topping debut in her native England, serves as the face of major clothing and cosmetic lines, and is rarely able to exit a building without the incessant pop of flashbulbs. In the United States, though, she's mostly still known as the badass blonde who wields a katana next to Iggy Azalea in the video for "Black Widow."

If things go the way she and her record label hope, that's about to change. "Obviously, America is the pinnacle," says Ora, who was signed Stateside by Jay Z and has toured with Drake and Coldplay. "If you're successful here, you've probably already won everything around the world." When the singer drops her still-untitled second album in early 2015, she'll join an influx of musicians whose passports are British and whose fingerprints have recently been all over the U.S. pop charts.

There's no doubt Ora is well-positioned: Her songs are bright and bombastic and propelled by her confident charisma, and she landed a small but plum role in the hotly anticipated big-screen adaptation of *Fifty Shades of Grey*. But she may have an advantage others before her lacked: a playing field that's more open than it's ever been: "With social media, the world is a much smaller place," says Kid Kelly, programmer of several pop stations, including Hits 1, on SiriusXM satellite radio. "Now you can tweet and Facebook with people everywhere. Everything is essentially at the same level." For a prime example, look no further than Lorde—the teenager who uploaded a catchy little ditty called "Royals" onto the streaming platform SoundCloud from her home in suburban New Zealand in November 2012. Within a year, she had a No. 1 hit on the *Billboard* Hot 100, and won two major Grammy awards.

"If someone's got a good song, it travels very, very quickly," adds Rob Stringer, the British-born Columbia Records CEO who has ushered in the incredible success of imports Adele, One Direction, and Ed Sheeran. "I mean, if you said 15 years ago, 'What is the number 28 record in Sweden? What is that record just added to the radio playlists in Britain?' It's all at your fingertips now." But, he adds, there's also "a lineage"—a perception of British music as having a certain quality control. Kelly sees it that way too: "I think that pop music in America is made with the intent of being commercial," he says. "The BS barometer is more fine-tuned now than ever, and people can tell that Sam Smith is an artist. You listen to Adele, and there's no way she wrote that record thinking, 'I want to be a commercial success.' She writes from the heart." Having talent, of course, doesn't suddenly mean getting

- Rita Ora in New York in September

KEVIN MAZUR/WIREIMAGE.COM

carte blanche from record labels with ever-tenuous bottom lines. "It is really difficult to go into meetings with 50- and 60-year-old men and you're a 23-year-old girl," Ora admits. "It's hard to say, 'This is what I want to do.' Especially in front of people who have been doing it for so long. The platform is great, but I also have to put a lot of work in."

And she's hardly the only one mining for American gold. Another wave of hopefuls is already poised for the spotlight, including the Adele-esque Ella Henderson and Australian George Ezra, who follows the same template as Grammy-nominated troubadours Sheeran and Hozier (and will be touring with both in the new year). "It's all connected," says Stringer, who brought Ezra to Columbia. "It's not dissimilar to when Nirvana came out of Seattle and all those acts came behind them, except this is a bit wider."

Crossing the Atlantic has never been a sure thing, even for the biggest British stars—just ask Robbie Williams. (Doesn't ring a bell? See sidebar.) But with the new democracy of distribution and more curious, discerning listeners than ever, their odds are vastly improved. "I think the British are leaving quite a mark because the way they make stuff is slightly different," Ora posits. Or maybe it's simply the per capita talent of a country that has, she says, "just loads of great voices." If American pop stars hope to keep up with their U.K. counterparts, they might want to start drinking Earl Grey and crisping up their accents. —KYLE ANDERSON

BOLD PREDICTION

№

5

An openly gay rapper will finally go mainstream

The blogosphere has welcomed out-and-proud talents like Le1f and Fly Young Red; now it's the Hot 100's turn.

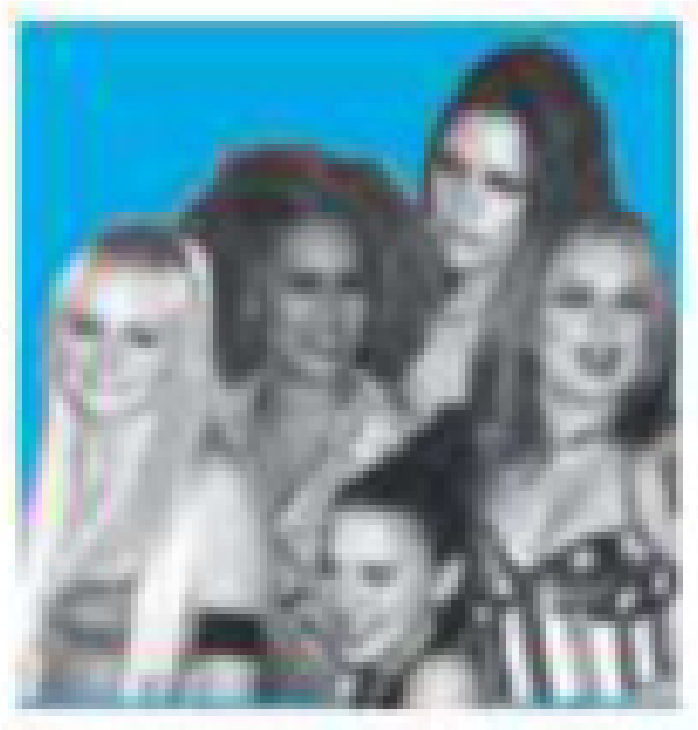
BRITISH IMPORTS THE HITS AND MISSES

Pop history has shown that homeland glory doesn't guarantee Stateside success. Below, a survey of England's finest—and floppiest—crossovers. —ISABELLA BIEDENHARN

MOST SUCCESSFUL

ADELE

When it comes to gripping songwriting, freakish vocal talent, and a little metric called sales, no other recent Brit can touch her cultural domination.



SPICE GIRLS

The Union Jack-clad quintet spiced up at least 11.5 million American lives with their records, and generally ruled '90s pop culture with their zig-a-zig-ah.

ONE DIRECTION

Yes, they were bred on a talent show, but these boys are more than pretty hair-dos; they've put out four straight No. 1 albums in just three years.

AMY WINEHOUSE

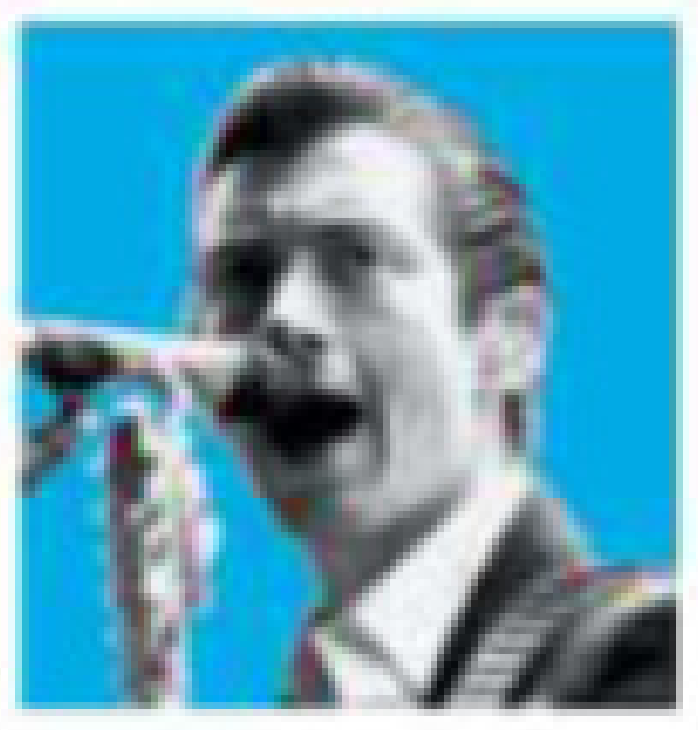
The late singer's fresh spin on old soul made her a household name—and 2.3 million of those households bought 2006's *Back to Black*.

ED SHEERAN

A humble street busker–turned–Grammy nominee, the folkie now counts Taylor Swift, Elton, and Pharrell as collaborators, and his songs fill stadiums.

JESSIE J

An in-demand songwriter first (she co-penned Miley's "Party in the U.S.A."), Jessie had mixed results with her own singles until "Bang Bang" exploded this year.



ARCTIC MONKEYS

When the arch indie rockers adopted a more arena sound on their fifth disc, *AM*, it went gold—and they started selling out *actual* arenas.

LEONA LEWIS

"Bleeding Love" was a smash for the onetime waitress and U.K. *X Factor* winner. The songs that followed, though, slipped down the charts.

DUFFY

She won the Grammy for Best Pop Vocal Album in 2009, but Winehouse handily won the retro-songbird sweepstakes, and Duffy's momentum soon slowed.

OLLY MURS

Anointed by Simon Cowell, flush with home-country hits, and chosen to tour with One Direction, Murs has still failed to reach upper pop echelons here.

ESTELLE

The soulful Kanye collab "American Boy" seemed to bode well for more cross-Atlantic matchups; on her own, however, she proved less powerful.

ROBBIE WILLIAMS

Overseas he's mega. Mention his name here and you'll hear crickets; Williams' label bet big and lost when his bid for America flamed out.

LEAST SUCCESSFUL

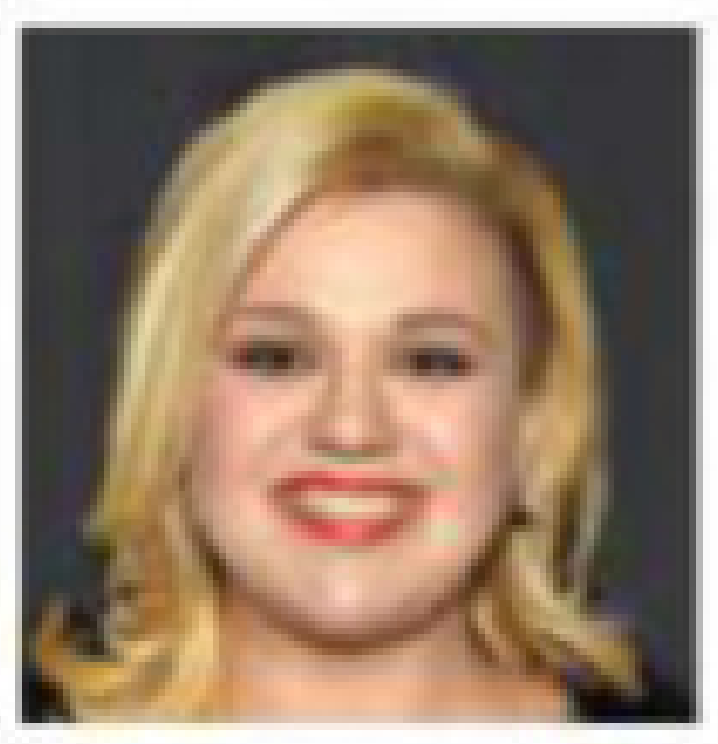
ADELE: KEVIN WINTER/GETTY IMAGES; SPICE GIRLS: DENNIS VAN TINE/UDV/LFI; ONE DIRECTION: KEVIN MAZUR/GETTY IMAGES; WINEHOUSE: YUI MOK/PA PHOTOS/LANDOV; SHEERAN: FRANK HOENSCH/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES; JESSIE J: OWEN SWEENEY/INVISION/AP IMAGES; ARCTIC MONKEYS: SHIRLAINE FORREST/WIREIMAGE.COM; LEWIS: PHOTOFAB/REX USA; DUFFY: KEVIN MAZUR/WIREIMAGE.COM; MURS: TRISTAN FEWINGS/GETTY IMAGES; ESTELLE: EVAN AGOSTINI/INVISION/AP; WILLIAMS: OLLIE MILLINGTON/WIREIMAGE.COM

20 More Albums

WHAT'S DUE FROM ADELE, RIHANNA, KANYE, MADONNA, AND OTHER ARTISTS TO GET EXCITED ABOUT, EVEN IF THEY REQUIRE LAST NAMES

RIHANNA

The Caribbean queen's been keeping her fans adrift since 2012, when she released the chart-smashing *Unapologetic*. But teases on social media and from possible collaborators including David Guetta point to fresh RiRi in early 2015.

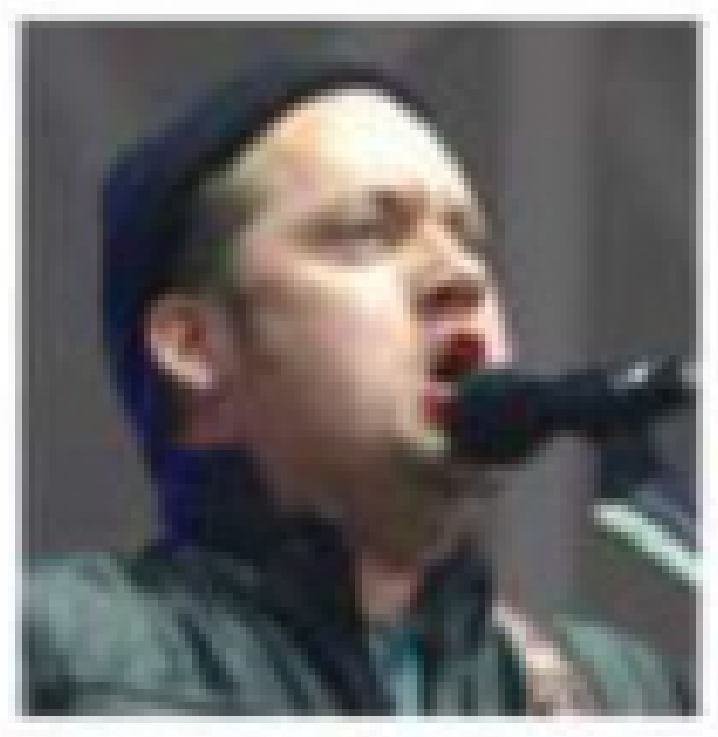


KELLY CLARKSON

She dipped into country and Christmas songs most recently, but live appearances prove she's still a massive pop powerhouse. We'll know more in January, when a promised duet with a major male star that she calls "out of the box" arrives.

SLEATER-KINNEY

The riot-grrrl pioneers regroup for Jan. 19's *No Cities to Love*, their first LP in 10 years. The scorching lead single, "Bury Our Friends," already has fans pogoing happily in their Doc Martens and anticipating more lady-rock excellence.



MODEST MOUSE

The misanthropic dukes of Northwest indie rock are finishing up *Strangers to Ourselves*, their first full-length since 2007—which means more off-kilter rhythms, oddly addictive melodies, and trademark wobbly tenor from frontman Isaac Brock.

MARK RONSON

He earned his stripes with Amy Winehouse's *Back to Black*, and the producer continues to home in on throwback sounds with *Uptown Special* (out Jan. 13), which includes the hit Bruno Mars collab "Uptown Funk" and lyrics from novelist Michael Chabon.

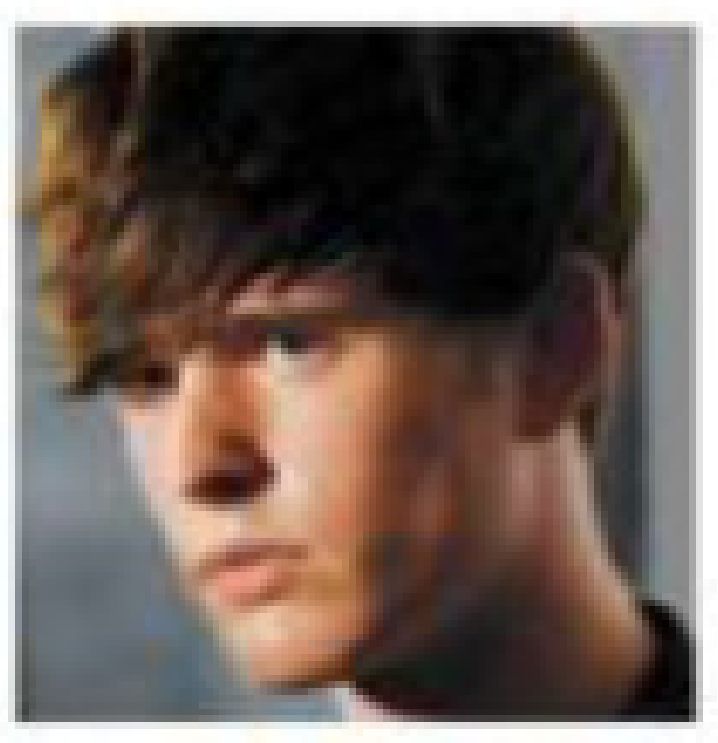
KENDRICK LAMAR

Hip-hop's Grammy-nominated golden child has hinted at an imminent release for his second album, which features production by an all-star lineup including Dr. Dre and Pharrell. Lead single "i" is already huge, and early listeners have called what they've heard "phenomenal." Want to hear it now? You'll have to find Lamar's 10-year-old brother; the rapper claims he's the only one who has a copy.

RIHANNA: CHRISTOPHER POLK/GETTY IMAGES FOR AMFAR; CLARKSON: LARRY BUSACCA/GETTY IMAGES; SLEATER-KINNEY: JOHN CLARK; MODEST MOUSE: TIM MOSENFELDER/GETTY IMAGES; RONSON: MONICA SCHIPPER/GETTY IMAGES; LAMAR: TAYLOR HILL/GETTY IMAGES

DRAKE

Canada's finest has floated some half-dozen tracks that may very well land on his upcoming *Views From the 6*—including the Lauryn Hill-sampling "Draft Day," on which he advises, "Tell 'em fix my suite up 'cause I'm comin' home/I heard they talking crazy, I was out of town." Duly noted, Drizzy.

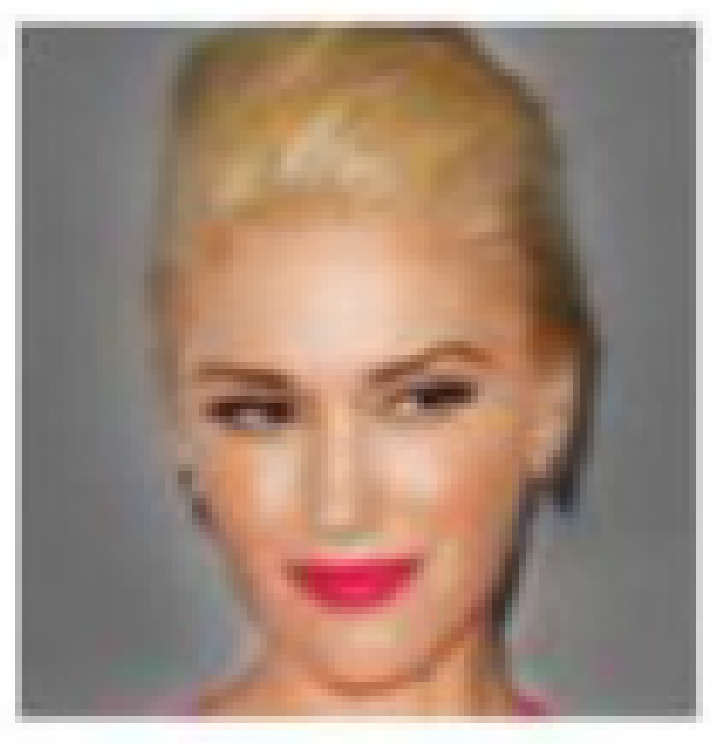


JAMES BLAKE

The celestial electro marvel won the U.K.'s Mercury Prize for 2013's *Overgrown*. His next outing reportedly features boldfaced guest spots from Kanye and Bon Iver's Justin Vernon.

ADELE

There may be no tougher act to follow than *21*—the industry-shifting 2011 sophomore smash that landed at No. 1 in 29 countries, sold 25 million copies, and won seven Grammys. What will the queen of heartbreak sound like now that she's 26 and a happily coupled mum? That famous bouffant is full of secrets; only she knows for sure.



GWEN STEFANI

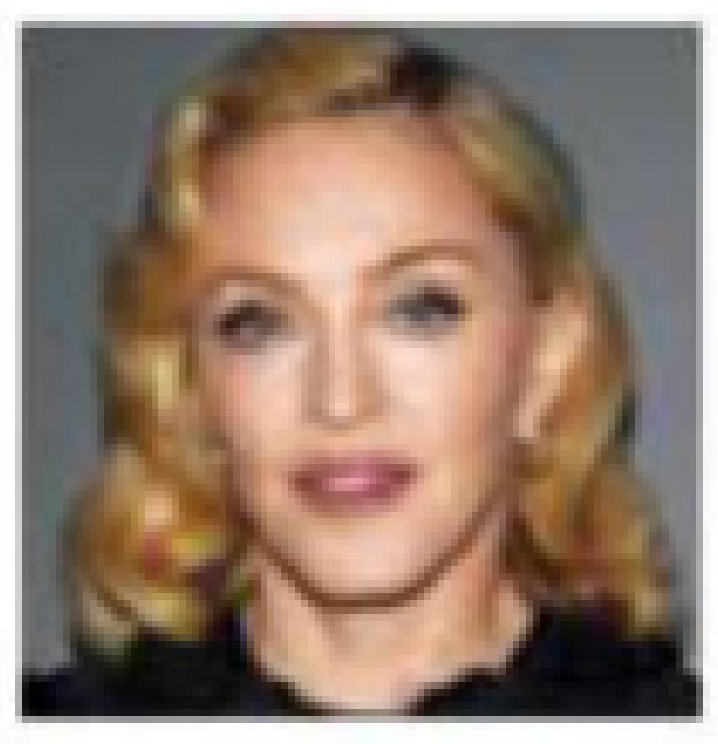
Her solo career took a backseat to roles as a *Voice* coach, fashion mogul, and mom, but the candy-colored reggae-pop blast of the Pharrell-helmed "Spark the Fire" proves she's still in the game.

KANYE WEST

Step aside, Springsteen: West has claimed that the follow-up to 2013's *Yeezus* will be his own *Born in the U.S.A.* That doesn't mean Yeezy's moved to New Jersey, but we do know that he's been in the studio with James Blake, DJ Mustard, and Theophilus London, and tracks have been described as "dark" and "hellish." Given his propensity for eleventh-hour revisions, though, that could all change tomorrow.

BOB DYLAN

The tunes, they are a-changin': The bard takes on Ol' Blue Eyes on *Shadows in the Night* (out Feb. 3)—an "uncovering" of 10 Sinatra classics recorded live in raw, stripped-down studio takes.



MADONNA

Diplo? Nicki Minaj? Count them in. And if her Instagram hashtags are any indication, look for a track called "#TrustNoBitch." But there's one bitch Madge might trust: rumored guest Miley Cyrus.

KID ROCK

With song titles such as "Good Times and Cheap Wine," "Ain't Enough Whiskey," and "Drinking Beer With Dad," the good-time Kid's *First Kiss* (out Feb. 24) should be a 180-proof blowout.

DRAKE: GREETSIA TENT/WIREIMAGE.COM; BLAKE: DAVE J. HOGAN/GETTY IMAGES; ADELE: KEVIN MAZUR/WIREIMAGE.COM; STEFANI: JASON LAVERIS/FILMMAGIC.COM; WEST: KATJA OGRIN/PA PHOTOS/ABACA; DYLAN: KEVIN WINTER/GETTY IMAGES; MADONNA: JAMIE MCCARTHY/GETTY IMAGES; KID ROCK: STEPHEN J. COHEN/GETTY IMAGES; COACHELLA: KARL WALTER/GETTY IMAGES

If last year's flower crown is wilting sadly in your closet, fear not: The 2015 festival

South by Southwest
AUSTIN
March 17-22

Big Ears Festival
KNOXVILLE, TENN.
March 27-29

Ultra Music Festival
MIAMI
March 27-29

Coachella
PALM SPRINGS
April 10-12; April 17-19

New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Fest
April 24-May 3

The Governors Ball
NEW YORK
June 5-7

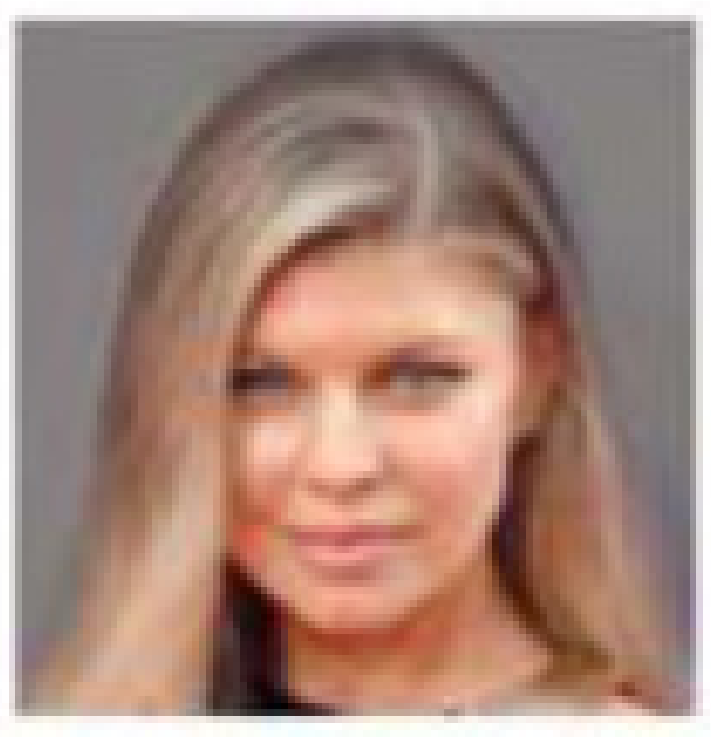
Bonnaroo
MANCHESTER, TENN.
June 11-14

MY 2015

"I'M PERSONALLY VERY EXCITED FOR RIHANNA*'S ALBUM. I KNOW SOME STUFF ABOUT THAT RECORD THAT NO ONE KNOWS."* —SAM SMITH

BJÖRK

What happens when Iceland's kookiest export since cured shark teams up with *Yeezus* producer Arca? Whatever the result, it will no doubt be odd and umlauted and generally unforgettable.

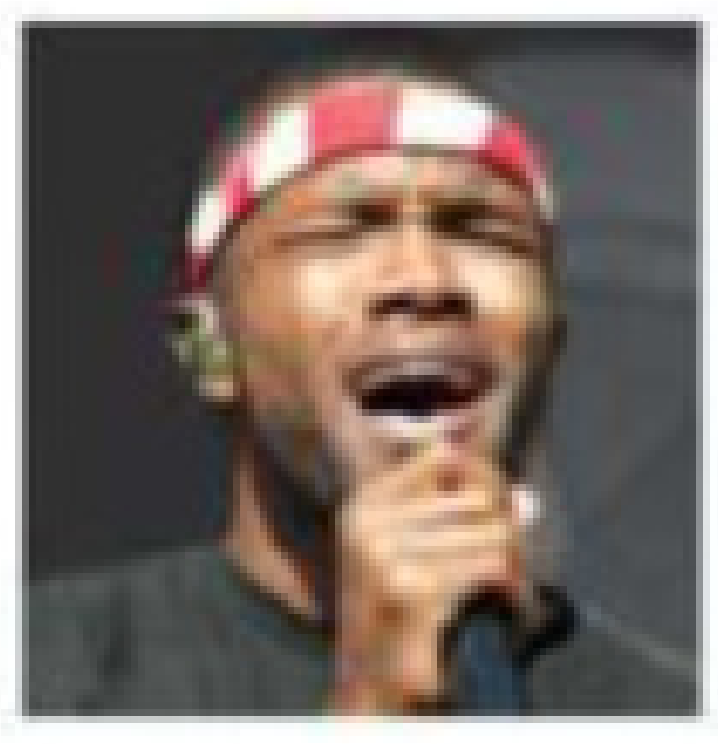


FERGIE

Nine years after her solo smash *The Dutchess*, the former Black Eyed Pea is back and citing influences from N.W.A to Jhené Aiko and Guns N' Roses. But don't worry, kids: She's still Fergalicious.

MUSE

The U.K. rockers are forging a new set of slinky jams that they hope to have out by summer, with the help of reclusive producer Mutt Lange (AC/DC, Maroon 5, Shania Twain).

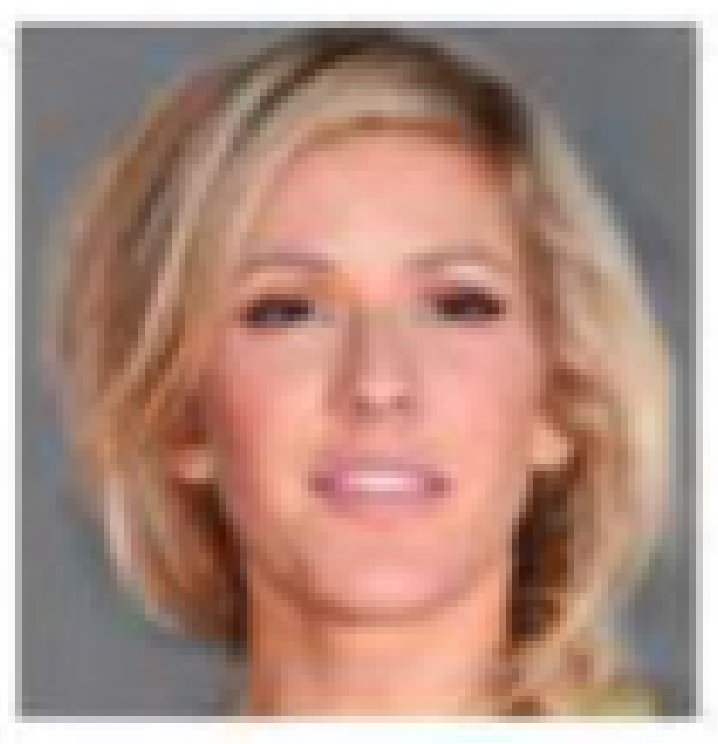


FRANK OCEAN

The R&B radical behind 2012 game changer *Channel Orange* has been largely AWOL, but a track dropped on Tumblr last month showed he's still a master of spare, openhearted intimacy.

FLORENCE + THE MACHINE

Pop music has been missing Florence Welch's gorgeous wail for too long; good thing the "Dog Days Are Over" songstress has confirmed that she's working on new material.



ELLIE GOULDING

After guesting for the likes of Drake, Calvin Harris, and Iggy Azalea, the fairy-voiced singer is fully focused on her third album, and has hinted that Drake might return the favor.

BREAKING BIG

6 ACTS ON THE VERGE

Rae Sremmurd	JAN **6** ■
James Bay	MARCH **23** ■
Raury	TBD ■
The Dø	JAN **27** ■
Seinabo Sey	TBD ■
Sheppard	TBD ■

They come from disparate cities (Brisbane, Stockholm, Tupelo) and genres (rap, pop, folk, soul), but these artists all have serious Next Big Thing potential. —KYLE ANDERSON

■ **RAE SREMMURD** *SremmLife* drops in weeks, and the trippy Mississippi rap duo already had two 2014 jams, "No Type" and "No Flex Zone."

■ **THE DØ** Equal parts indie quirk and Euro drama from a beautifully moody Parisian pair; their *Shake Shook Shaken* is due next month.

■ **SEINABO SEY** The Swedish electro-soul diva's sublime club anthem "Younger" deserves to cross over here; check her EP now on iTunes.

■ **JAMES BAY** The U.K. strummer's pretty melodies (and an even prettier face) are earning his *Chaos and the Calm* major hype.

■ **RAURY** Lorde and Drake are fans of the Atlanta singer-rapper's digital debut, *Indigo Child*, which just landed him a record deal.

■ **SHEPPARD** The folk-pop Aussies' *Bombs Away* will get its Stateside bow next year, thanks to the addictive "Geronimo."

season is already gearing up, so start saving your frequent-flier miles.

Firefly Music Festival	DOVER, DEL.	**June 18–21**
Electric Daisy Carnival	LAS VEGAS	**June 19–21**
Forecastle	LOUISVILLE, KY.	**July 17–19**
Pitchfork Music Festival	CHICAGO	**July 17–19**
Lollapalooza	CHICAGO	**July 31–Aug. 2**
Electric Zoo	NEW YORK	**Sept. 4–6**
Austin City Limits	AUSTIN	**Oct. 2–4; Oct. 9–11**
Voodoo	NEW ORLEANS	**Oct. 30–Nov. 1**

SMITH: DAVID WOLFF/PATRICK/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES; BJORK: MARK HORTON/WIREIMAGE.COM; FERGIE: AXELLE/BAUER-GRIFFIN/FILMMAGIC.COM; OCEAN: DAVID REDFERN/REDFERNS/GETTY IMAGES; WELCH: MICHEL DUFOUR/WIREIMAGE.COM; GOULDING: KARWAI TANG/WIREIMAGE.COM; THE DO: ALICE MOTIE; RAE SREMMURD: ROGER KISBY/GETTY IMAGES; SEY: MIKAE; RAURY: FAISAL MUHAMMAD; COACHELLA: CHARLEY GALLAY/GETTY IMAGES

2015
PREVIEW

BOOKS

TANTALIZING **TITLES** FOR THE MOST DISCERNING READER

TREND ALERT

Is *The Kind Worth Killing* the Next *Gone Girl*?

IN THE WAKE OF GILLIAN FLYNN'S BLOCKBUSTER THRILLER COMES A TRIO OF **PITCH-BLACK TALES** (INCLUDING PETER SWANSON'S BUZZY NOVEL) OF MARITAL REVENGE—AND MURDER

SINCE THE STRATOSPHERIC SUCCESS of *Gone Girl* in 2012, publishers and readers alike have been searching for the next deliciously cynical curdled-marriage mystery. A handful of possible successors to Gillian Flynn's best-seller cropped up in 2013 and 2014, but 2015 will see a trio of sinister page-turners that seem worthy of the *Gone Girl* crown, all featuring shifty narrators with wildly conflicting accounts of why their marriages went downhill. That's the central conflict in most ugly divorces, of course, but add murder and disappearances to the mix, and you may have a future David Fincher film.

Take *The Kind Worth Killing* by Peter Swanson (Feb. 3). This homage to Patricia Highsmith's classic *Strangers on a Train* shares a lot of *Gone Girl's* hallmarks but cranks up the volume on each. There aren't just two unreliable narrators, there are four. There isn't just one enormous, game-changing twist. Try three, including one at the end that will take your breath away. You'll also lose count of all the sociopaths. Or are they psychopaths? It doesn't matter—just know that they're each deranged but oh-so-compelling.

And hurtling in from London is Paula Hawkins' debut, *The Girl on the Train* (Jan. 13). What's even happening in this one? At first you get a fractured portrait of three women, mostly from the hazy perspective of Rachel Watson, an out-of-control mess who's too blackout-drunk on canned gin and tonics to remember events that should be major plot points. But stick with it, because once the crazy revelations start rolling in, you'll want to witness the inevitable fiery wreckage.

Then there's Heidi Pitlor's *The Daylight Marriage* (May 5), the most understated and plausible of the three. Lovell's unhappy wife, Hannah, goes missing on the way to work one morning; in alternating chapters, we see Lovell's unraveling in the weeks after the disappearance, as the police discover the bones of an unidentified woman one by one; even more chilling, we learn the truth about what happened to Hannah in a way that's all the more disturbing for its subtlety.

We can offer up all sorts of psychologically sound explanations for why we devour books about toxic marriages: Is marriage just a series of con games? Can you ever truly know another person? Do husband-and-wife thrillers let us exorcise our own deepest fears (or sinister wishes) about our partners? That's the scariest thought of all, that there's a tiny sliver of *Gone Girl* lodged inside all of us. But whatever the reason, we're hooked on these books. We're committed. We've said "I do."

—STEPHAN LEE

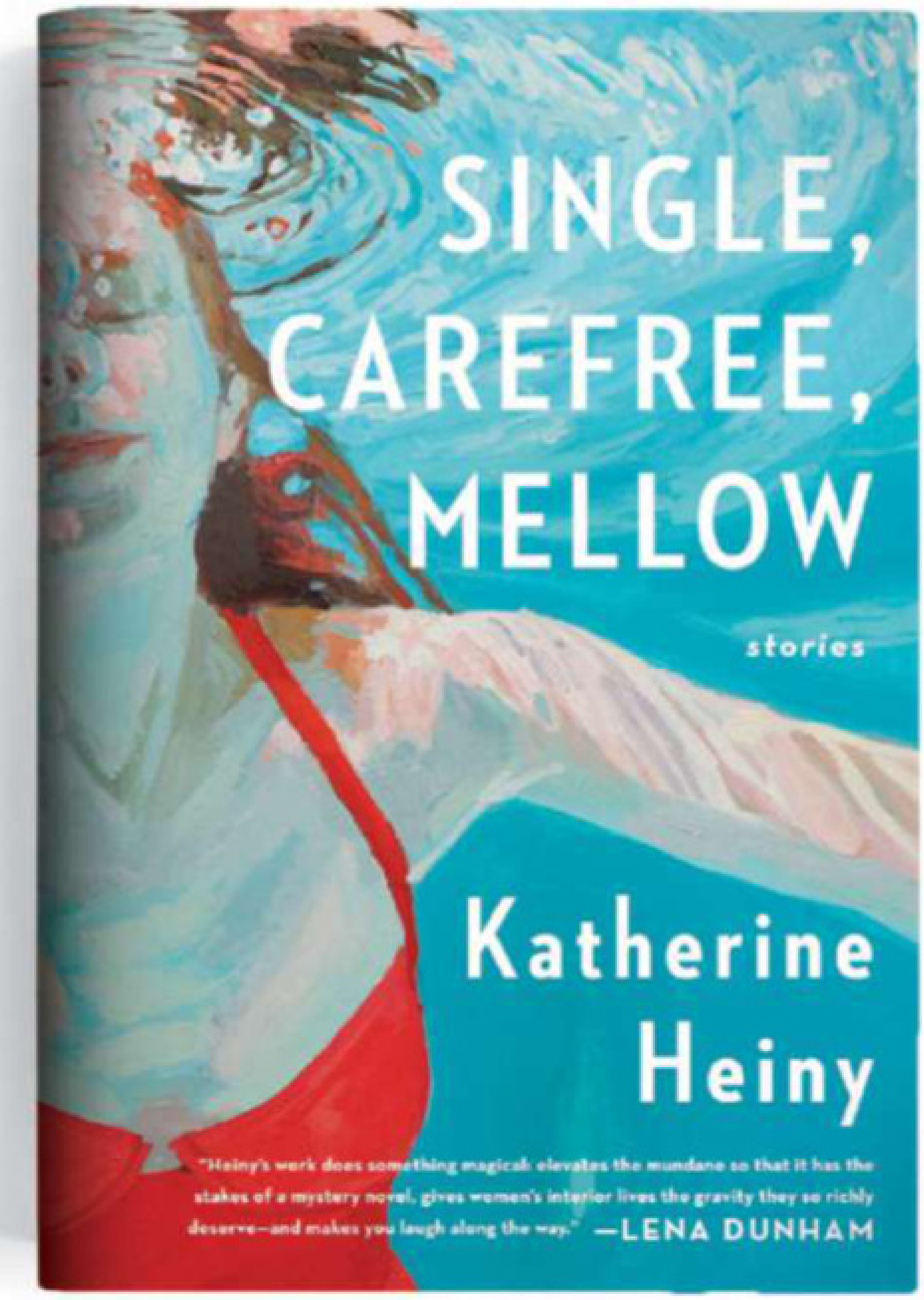
Illustration by **PAUL BLOW**

BREAKING BIG

KATHERINE HEINY

Single, Carefree, Mellow FEB 3 ■

The buzziest book of 2015 would have to be Single, Carefree, Mellow, *a saucy short-story collection that took Katherine Heiny more than 22 years to write.*


SINGLE, CAREFREE, MELLOW
stories
Katherine Heiny
"Heiny's work does something magical: elevates the mundane so that it has the stakes of a mystery novel, gives women's interior lives the gravity they so richly deserve—and makes you laugh along the way." —LENA DUNHAM

In 1992 you published your first short story, "How to Give a Wrong Impression," in *The New Yorker*. You were 23—that's unheard of!
I was in graduate school, and I just sent the story to a lot of magazines. I got 31 rejection letters. My friend Jennifer asked, "What did *The New Yorker* say?" I was like, "I didn't send it there," and she said, "*You're supposed to start there!*" I mailed it on a Thursday afternoon and they called Friday morning—I didn't even know the mail worked that fast—and a guy with a deep voice asked, "Is Katherine Heiny there?" I thought it was the landlord asking for rent, so I said, "No." Then he said, "Well, this is [*New Yorker* editor] Roger Angell," so I said, "Wait, it *is* me!" I think that cemented my reputation as a nitwit forever.

You had this big, splashy success at a young age, but 22 years later this is your first adult book.
Maybe I'm unusual in this way, but for a long time I never thought about having a book. I'm addicted to the flash and dazzle of selling a short story. You write it, boom, you send it out, somebody gets back to you, it's done. I've always said I'd make a good communist because I'm good at three-year plans!

HEINY: MICHAEL LIONSTAR

"I'M ADDICTED TO THE FLASH AND DAZZLE OF SELLING A SHORT STORY. YOU WRITE IT, BOOM, YOU SEND IT OUT, SOMEBODY GETS BACK TO YOU, IT'S DONE."

How did you make a living from writing during that time?
I published a story in *Seventeen* that had a very young protagonist, and I got an offer to write YA books. I did that for about five years. It was when my younger son started first grade that I could go back to writing, and it was like, "Wow, it's gotten so much easier. I'm so much faster." All those years of lying fallow really helped.

A character in the first story in your collection also wrote YA novels...
Yes! In the beginning, they wanted me to write the 25th book in a series and I read the first 24 over a weekend—I have never been the same since. [*Laughs*] They start you way back in a series that already has a following so that if you screw it up, you already have a die-hard fan base. Then they move you up so you're writing books that are in the first 10, and then they give you your own series. It was fun!

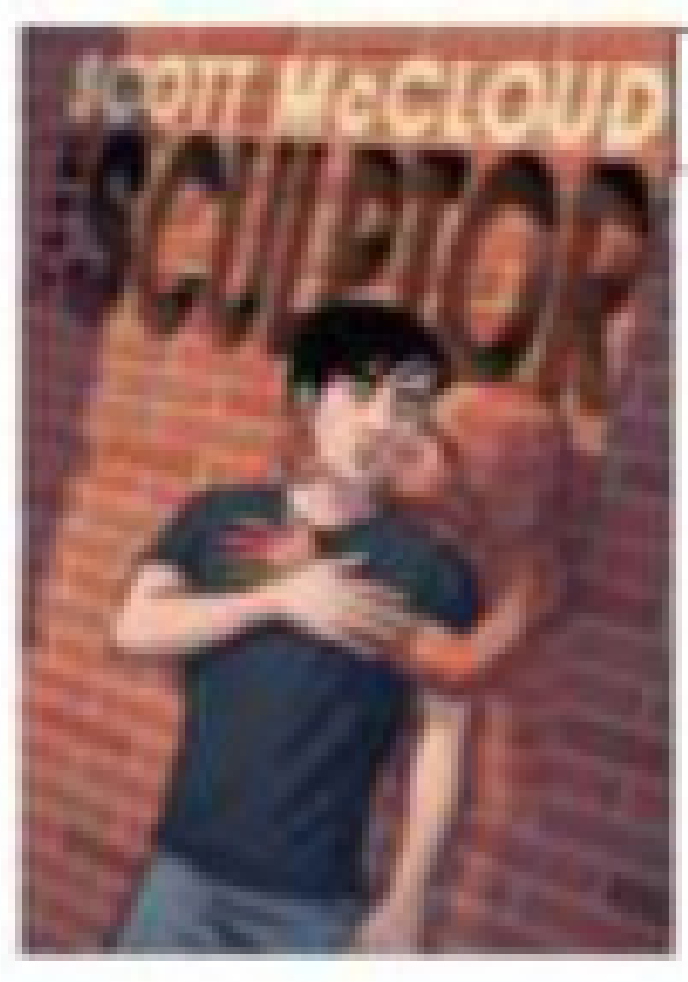
Can you tell us the series you wrote?
I don't want to—I'd be embarrassed!

Why is infidelity such a theme in your stories?
My husband is a retired MI6 agent. For most of our married life, he was undercover and got death threats from the KGB. Before his identity was revealed, he used to say [as a cover] he was the desk officer for Iran. Once we went to a dinner party and that's what we were supposed to tell people, but the actual guy who had that job was at that party! We had an emergency meeting in the bathroom while he cooked up another job. I think secrets, or the deceptive nature of his job, have been a big part of our lives. I'm not interested at all in foreign policy, more in domestic microcosms—so it seems natural to me that my characters have secrets and agendas. —STEPHAN LEE

Let's elevate the moment.
3:10
Apps
bing
Pandora
yelp
Reorder
68
A/C
Toyota Corolla
toyota.com/corolla
TOYOTA
Let's Go Places

Options shown. ©2014 Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.

20 More


SCOTT McCLOUD
THE SCULPTOR

10

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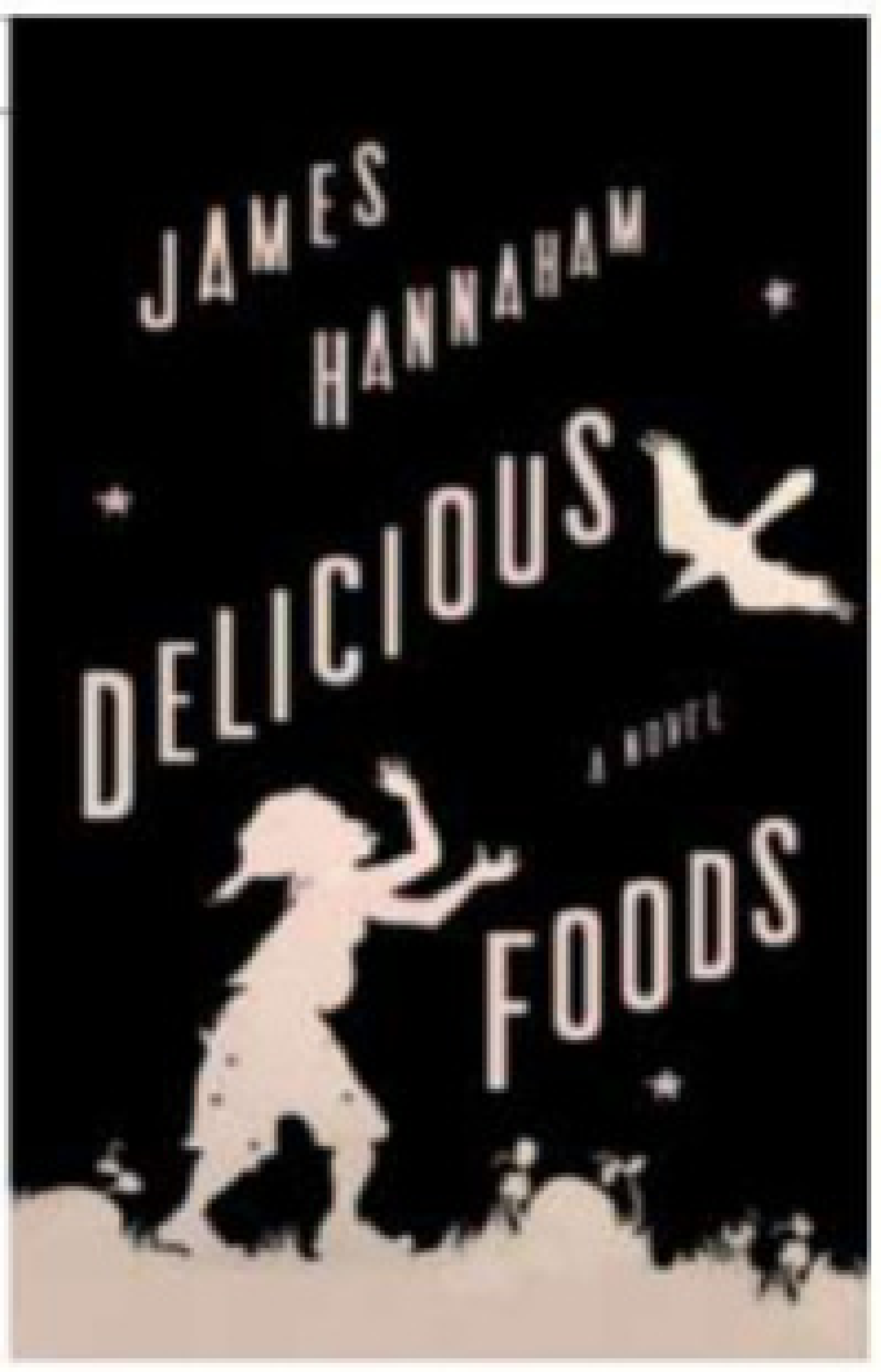
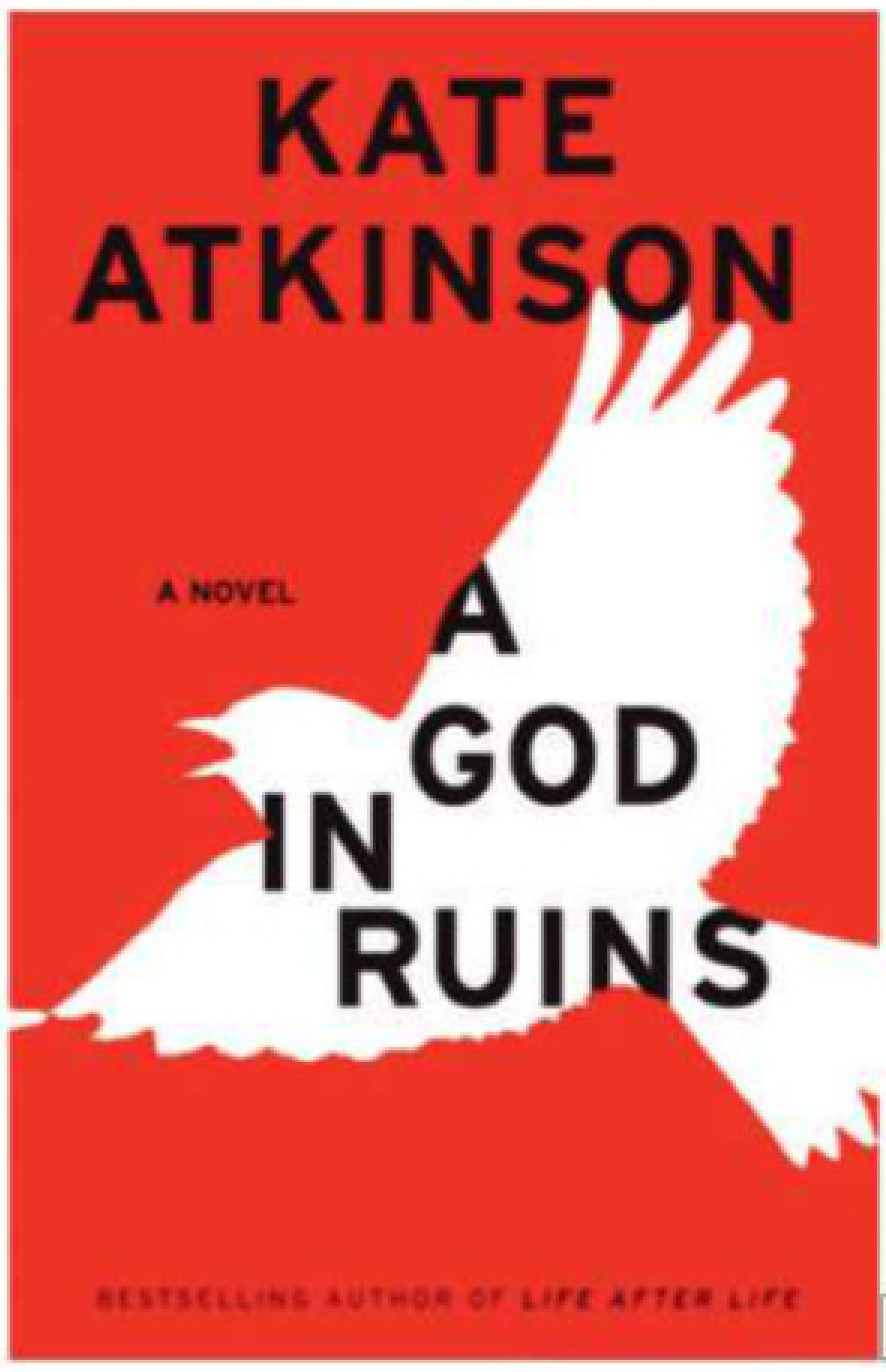

JAMES HANNAHAM
DELICIOUS
A NOVEL
FOODS

4

1

MAKING NICE
MATT SUMELL


KATE ATKINSON
A NOVEL
A GOD IN RUINS
BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF LIFE AFTER LIFE

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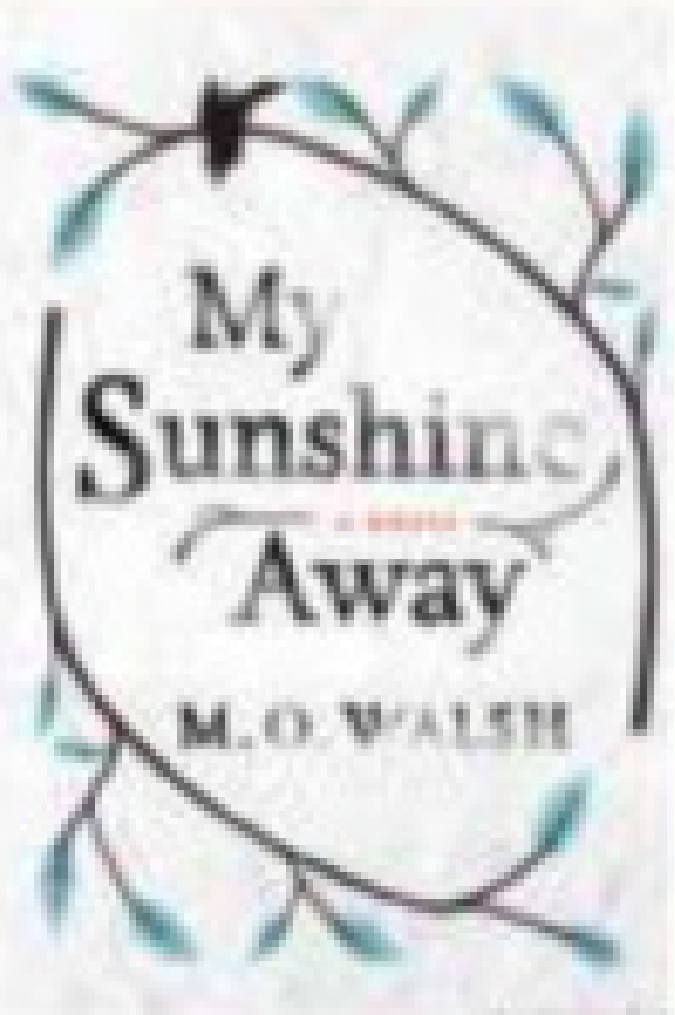
My Sunshine Away
M.O. WALSH

7

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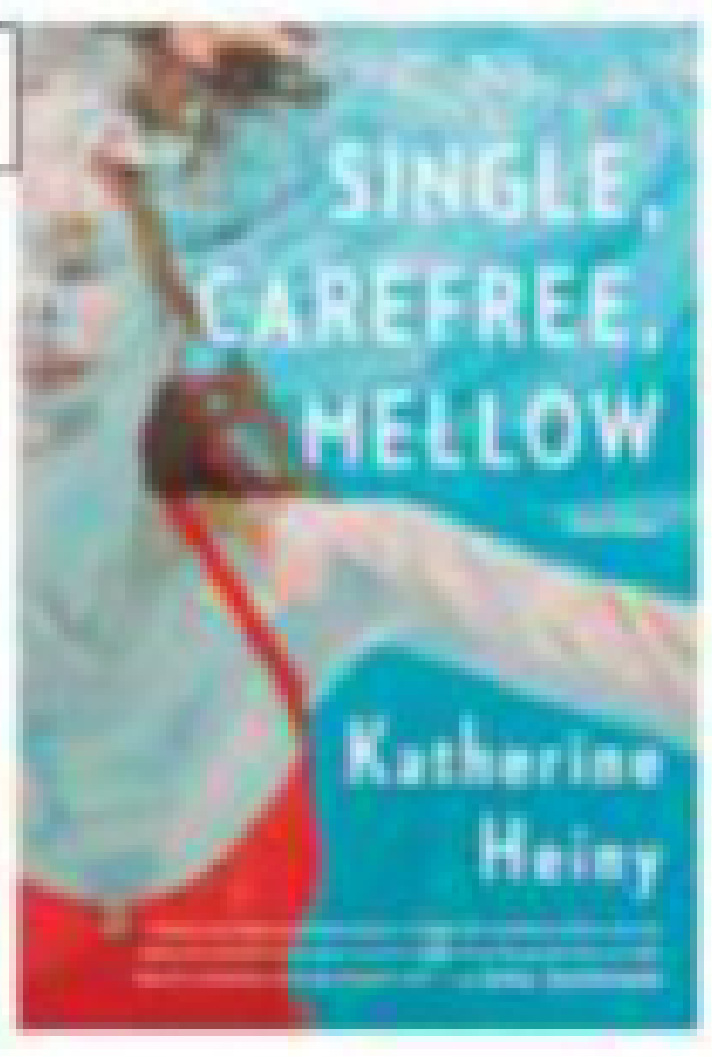
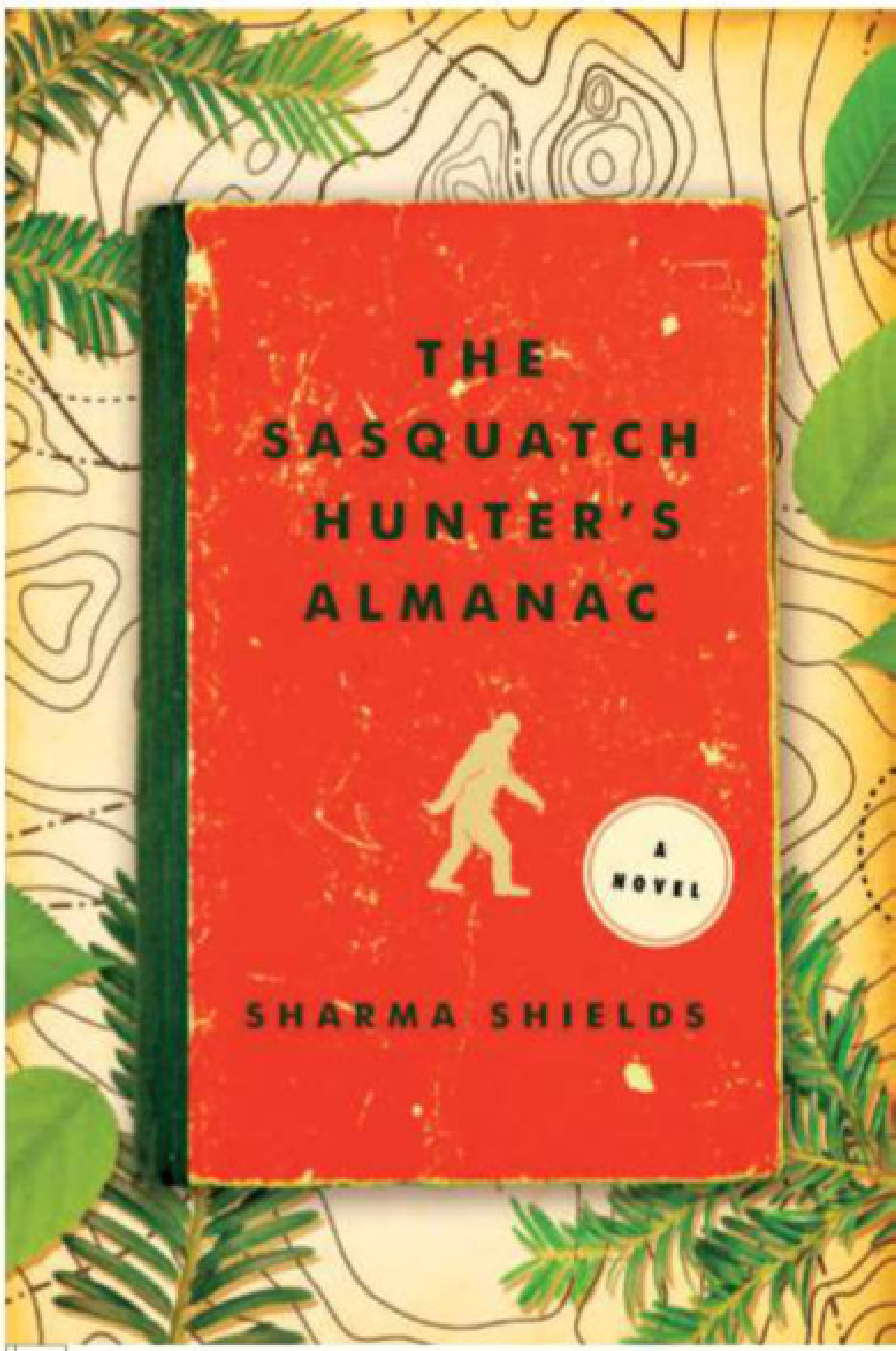

SINGLE, CAREFREE, MELLOW
Katherine Heiny


THE SASQUATCH HUNTER'S ALMANAC
A NOVEL
SHARMA SHIELDS

9

SHORT STORIES

1 Making Nice
MATT SUMELL
Indelible writing devoted to a raging idiot-loser is a great American literary tradition. Meet Alby, an Everybro for the millennial set.

2 Single, Carefree, Mellow
KATHERINE HEINY
This whip-smart collection about women wrapped up in all kinds of love affairs will have you laughing out loud.

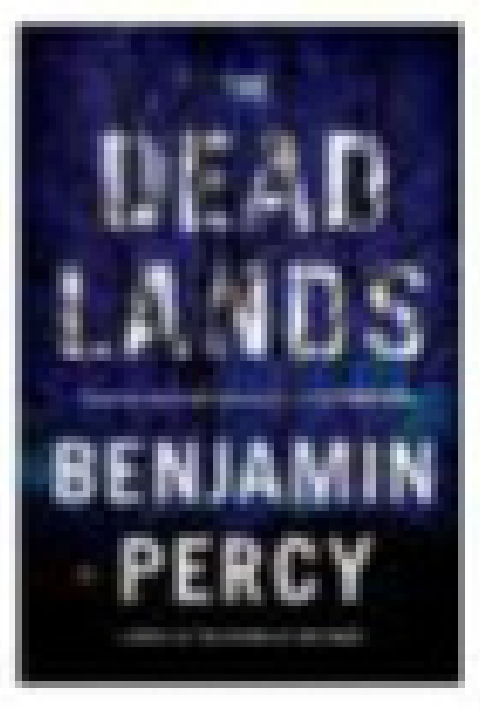
BIG FAT NOVELS

3 City on Fire
GARTH RISK HALLBERG
The most anticipated debut novel of the year, a 900-pager set in '70s NYC, sold for nearly $2 million.

4 Delicious Foods
JAMES HANNAHAM
Don't let the appealing title fool you. This searing novel tackles death and big food corporations. Also, it's partly narrated by crack cocaine. Yep.

5 God Help the Child
TONI MORRISON
The Nobel Prize winner's new novel centers on a woman who's haunted by a childhood decision.

6 A God in Ruins
KATE ATKINSON
This spin-off of Atkinson's superb *Life After Life* follows Ursula Todd's brother Teddy in the years post-WWII.


THE DEAD LANDS
BENJAMIN PERCY

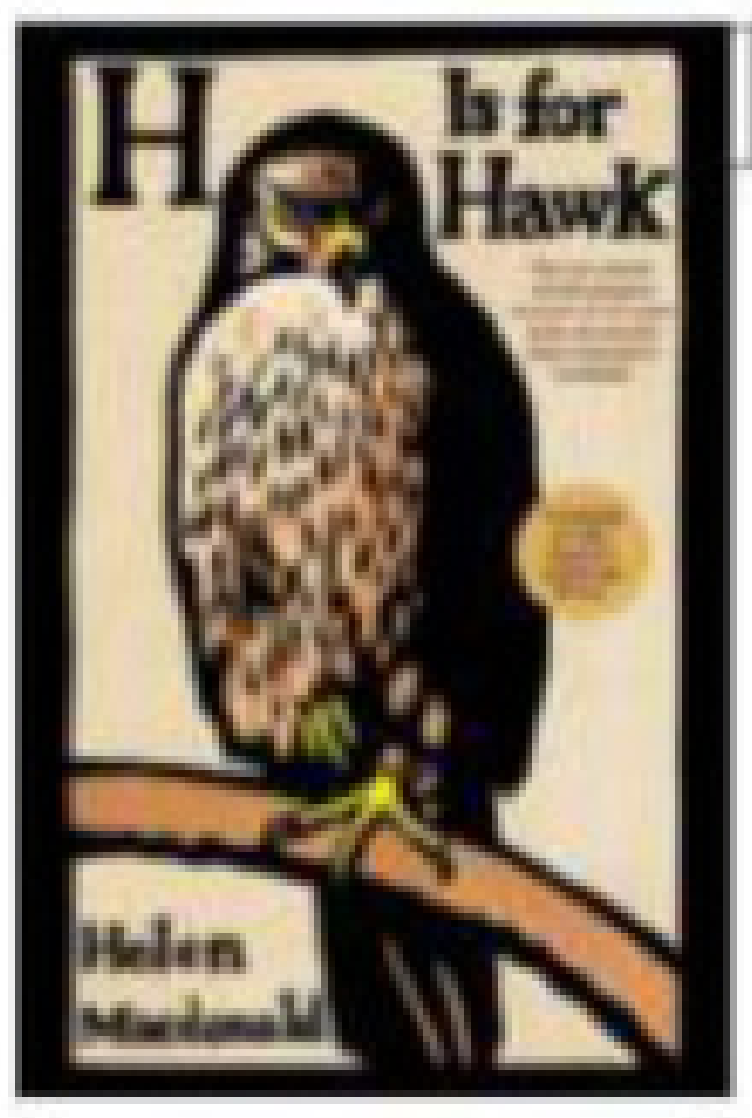
MY 2015

"I'M CRAZY ABOUT THE DEAD LANDS *BY BENJAMIN PERCY, WHICH I READ IN AN ADVANCE GALLEY. IT'S A POSTAPOCALYPTIC REIMAGINING OF THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION. THE NARRATIVE IS FAST-PACED; THE WRITING IS CLEAR AND GRACEFUL."* —STEPHEN KING

7 My Sunshine Away
M.O. WALSH
A crime against a beloved local girl roils a Baton Rouge, La., suburb. Sure to be a breakout debut.

8 Purity
JONATHAN FRANZEN
Franzen's novels never fail to elicit equal parts hype and hate. *Purity*

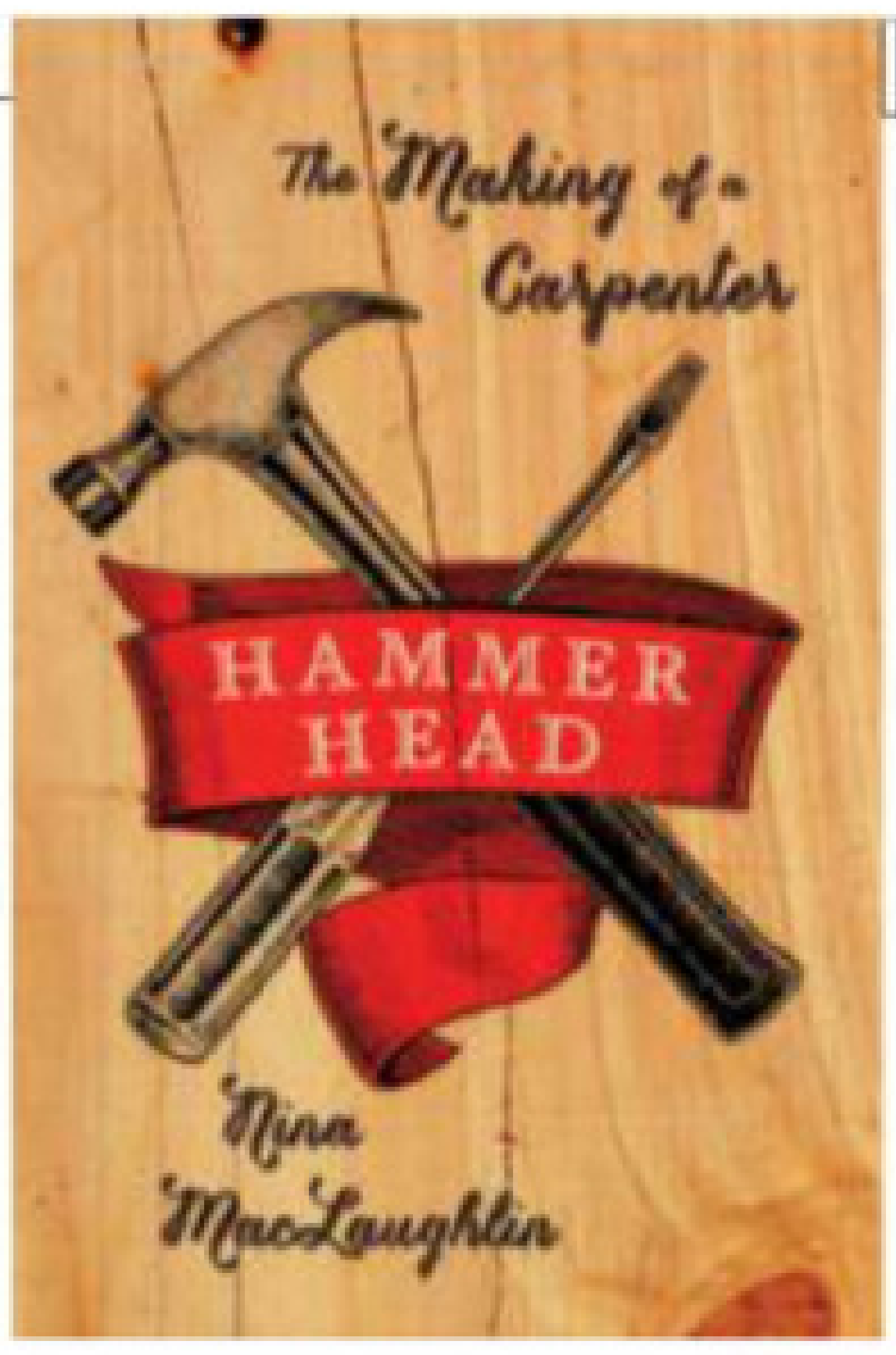
FRANZEN: KATHY CHETKOVTICH; HALLBERG: JORDAN ALPORT; KING: DEREK STORM/SPLASH NEWS


H Is for Hawk
Helen Macdonald

12

Books

2015 IS SHAPING UP TO BE A YEAR OF BIG, GUTSY MEMOIRS, AMAZING DEBUT NOVELS, AND HISTORY BOOKS SO ABSORBING THEY READ LIKE FICTION. WE CAN'T WAIT.


The Making of a Carpenter
HAMMER HEAD
Nina MacLaughlin

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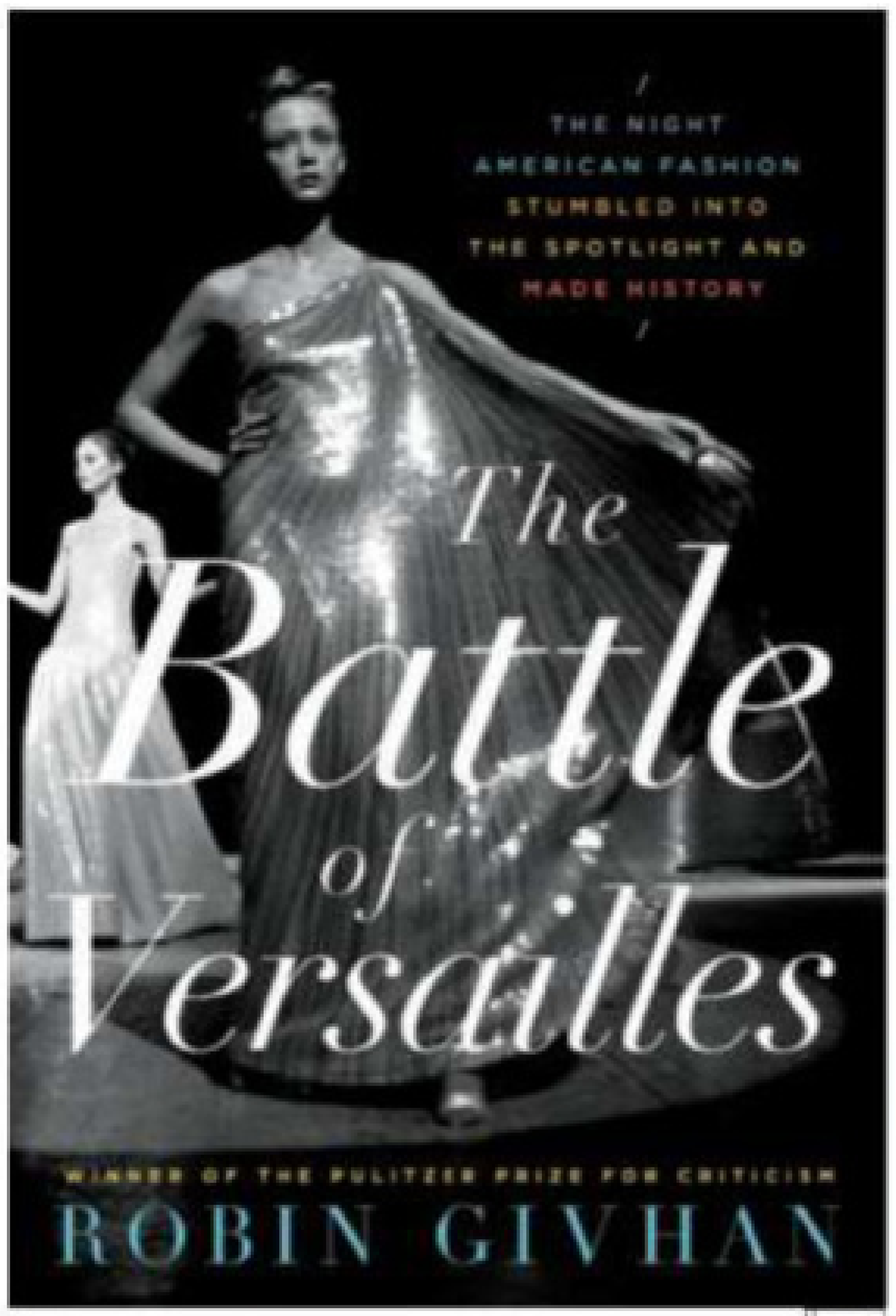
THE NIGHT AMERICAN FASHION STUMBLED INTO THE SPOTLIGHT AND MADE HISTORY
The Battle of Versailles
WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE FOR CRITICISM
ROBIN GIVHAN

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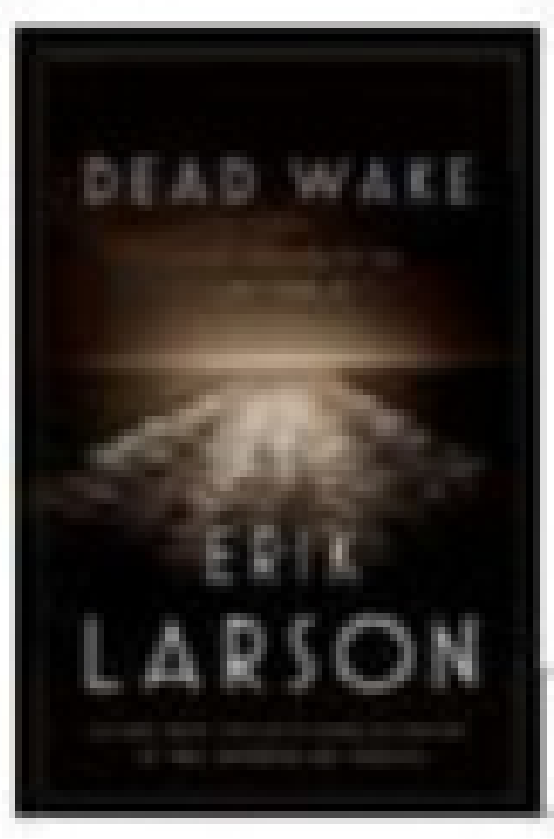
DEAD WAKE
ERIK LARSON

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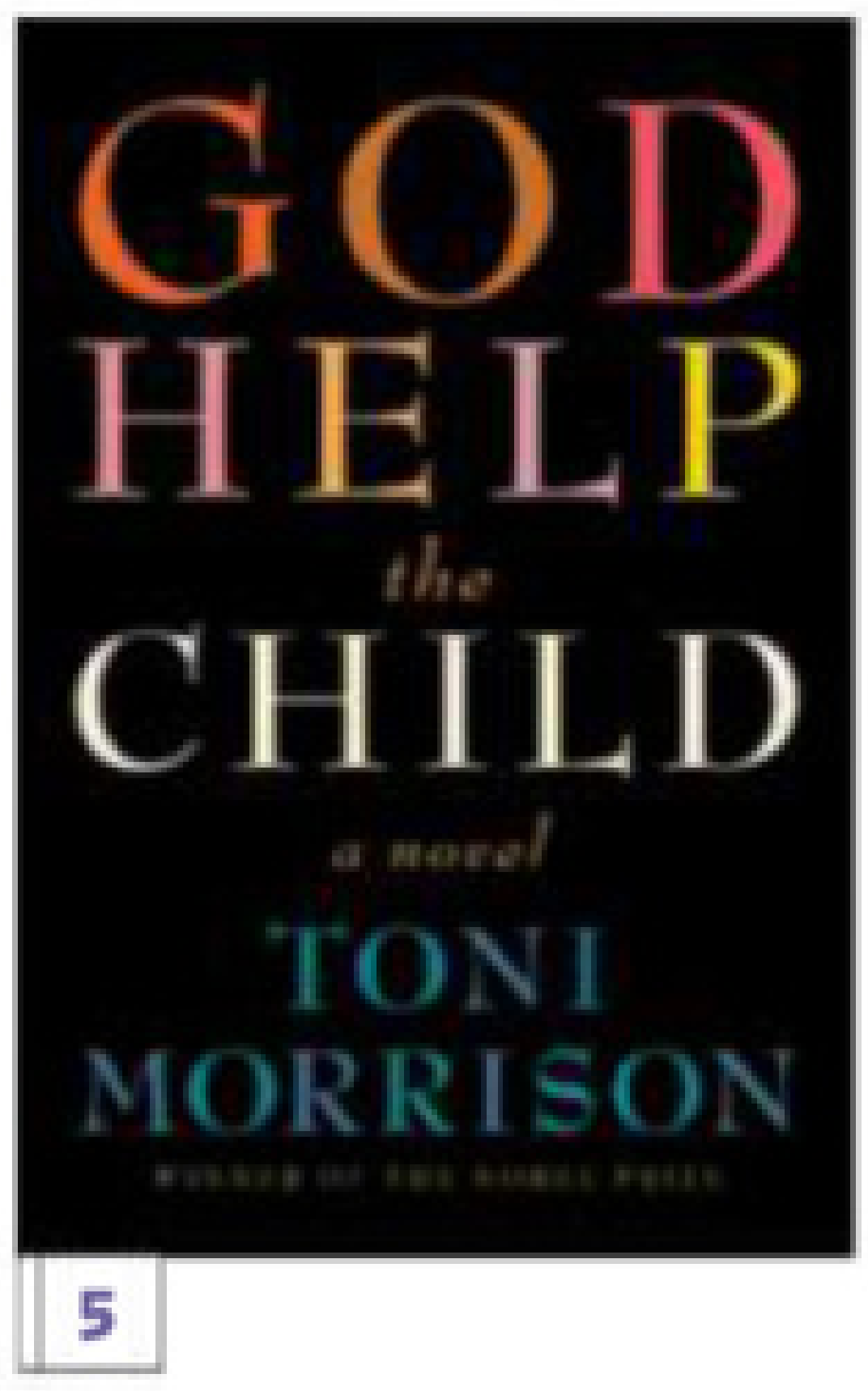
GOD HELP the CHILD
a novel
TONI MORRISON

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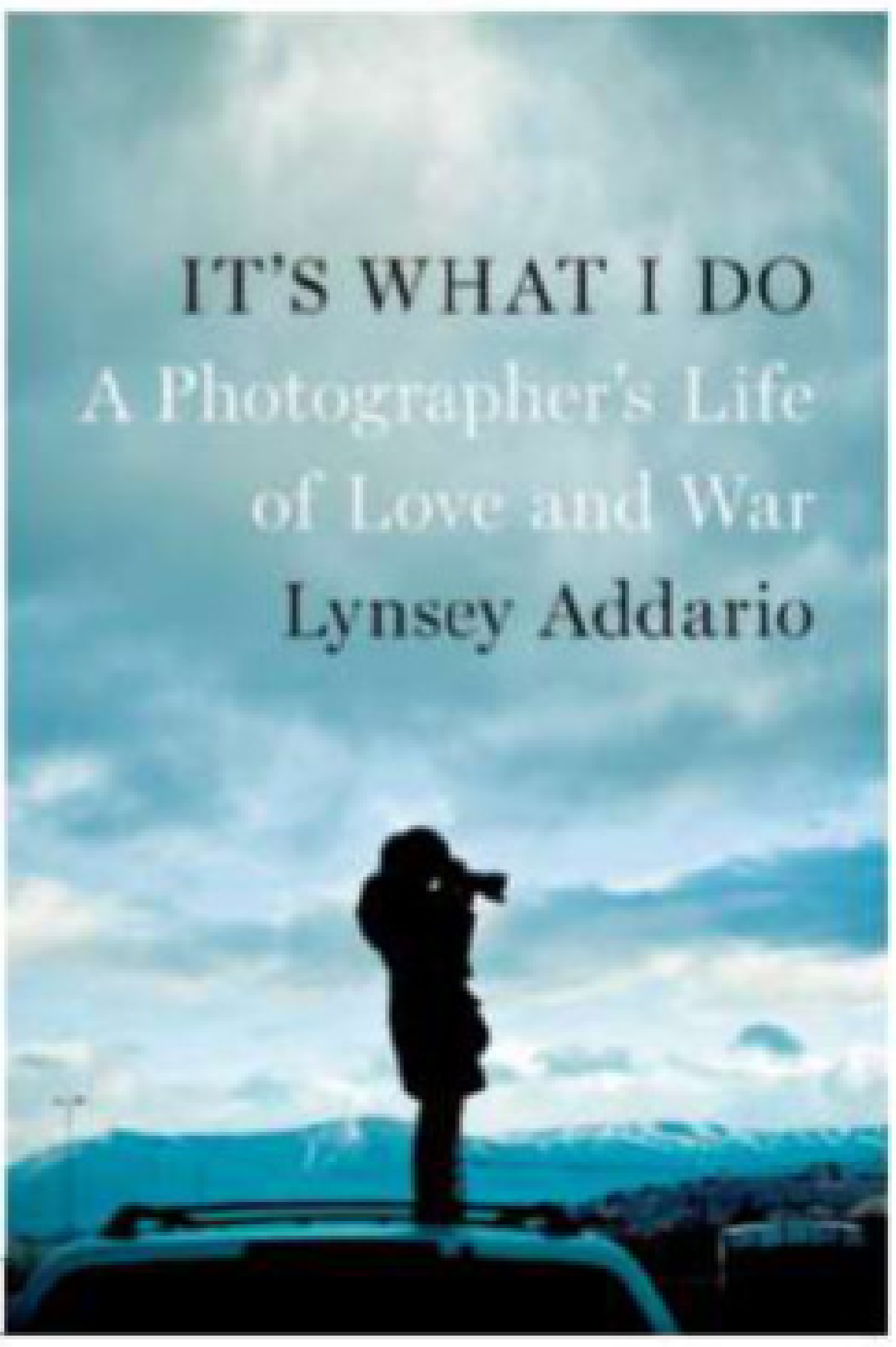
IT'S WHAT I DO
A Photographer's Life of Love and War
Lynsey Addario

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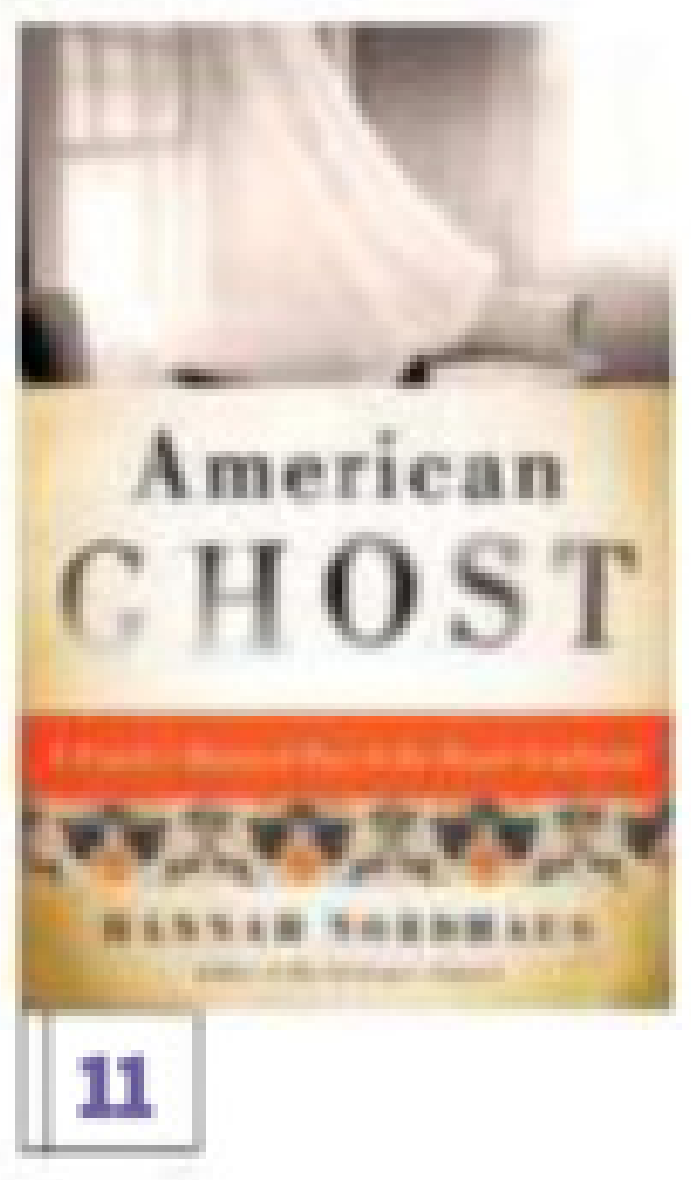
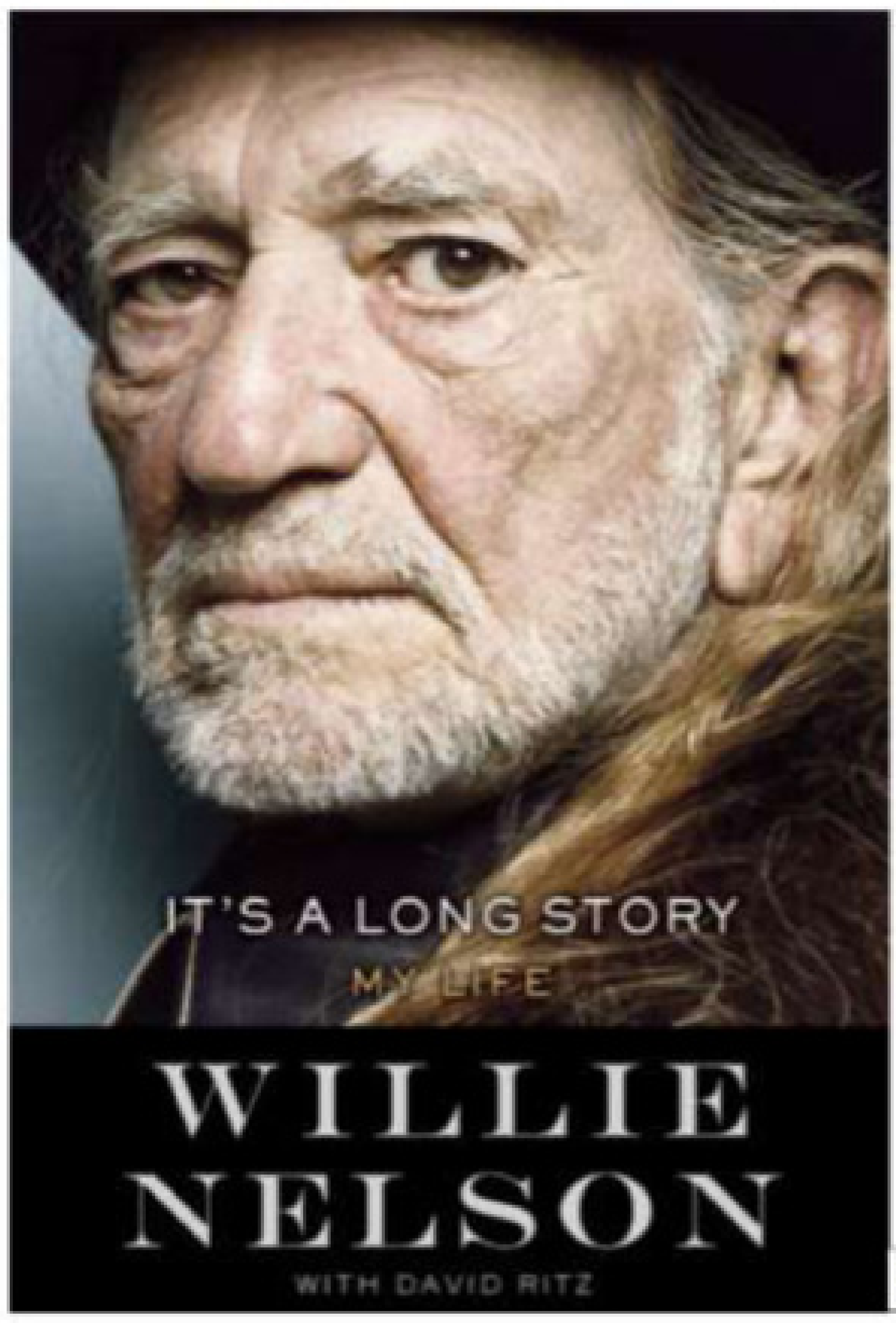

American GHOST
HANNAH NORDHAUS

11


IT'S A LONG STORY
MY LIFE
WILLIE NELSON
WITH DAVID RITZ

16

SMITH: EDWARD MAPPLETHORPE; BERGEN: JONATHAN BECKER; SCHIFF: ELENA SEIBERT

promises to be a departure from his previous works *The Corrections* and *Freedom.*

9 The Sasquatch Hunter's Alamanac
SHARMA SHIELDS
Magic realism abounds in this coming-of-age story about battling monsters, real and symbolic.

10 The Sculptor
SCOTT McCLOUD
An artist trades his life for the ability to sculpt anything he can imagine in this inventive graphic novel.

MEMOIRS

11 American Ghost
HANNAH NORDHAUS
A journalist roots out the truth about an ancestor who's believed to be haunting a Santa Fe, N.M., hotel.

12 H Is for Hawk
HELEN MACDONALD
A spiritual account about taming birds of prey.

13 Hammer Head
NINA MacLAUGHLIN
An academic saws and whittles her way to becoming a carpenter.

14 It's What I Do
LYNSEY ADDARIO
The author writes of her harrowing experiences as a war photojournalist in the Middle East. Kathryn Bigelow, are you listening?

15 M Train
PATTI SMITH
The follow-up to Smith's award winner *Just Kids.*

CELEBRITY TELL-ALLS

16 It's a Long Story
WILLIE NELSON
The grizzled folk icon spins a good yarn straight from the gut.

17 A Fine Romance
CANDICE BERGEN
In her sequel to *Knock Wood*, Bergen spills all about motherhood and *Murphy Brown.*

HISTORIES

18 The Battle of Versailles
ROBIN GIVHAN
Not the wartime history you think it is, but rather a fascinating look at a transformative 1973 fashion spectacle in the Palace of Versailles.

19 Dead Wake
ERIK LARSON
The master of popular nonfiction is back with a gripping account of the sinking of the *Lusitania.* A sure bet for history buffs.

20 The Witches
STACY SCHIFF
Cleopatra author Schiff returns with a book about the Salem witch trials.

Vision Quest

OUR BOLD PREDICTIONS AREN'T ENOUGH? WE GOT INTEL FROM **PSYCHIC** NATALIE SINGER ON EVERYTHING FROM BEYONCÉ TO *GAME OF THRONES*. (SHE EVEN THREW IN A TIDBIT ABOUT DEMI MOORE!)

ON BEYONCÉ

It's time for her to get on the EGOT track. Will we see her take on a new movie role in 2015?
There's not a movie being made and there isn't a script, but there are "We need to make me a movie star" talks. She's going to figure out a way to do it so it's no-fail. Like, they're not going to bring a project to somebody else; they want to gather all their own money. Right now she's too self-conscious. She believes her own hype. It's like another Madonna—actually, she'll be a little better than Madonna. She's got it in her, but she has to let go.

ON *GAME OF THRONES*

Are we going to get any hints that Khaleesi and Jon Snow are related?
Absolutely.

In the books, Catelyn Stark is brought back to life as Lady Stoneheart. She hasn't made an appearance on the show yet. Will she?
Yeah. This woman will be on the show. There's a story line that will be contingent on her, her actions, something she does, but it doesn't seem to be long. It seems like there's a short arc for her to come back to set something up, then she can just come in and out.

Will we see Ser Pounce the cat again?
Yes, he comes back—there's a big twist. Somehow they're trying to take advantage of his popularity. It's not real, so the cat didn't really go anywhere.... If it were your cat, we could look into where it disappeared to, but the cat didn't disappear. It's a plot point.

ON *BIG BROTHER*

Will there be another pseudo-celebrity like Frankie Grande?
Absolutely, somebody that is supposed to be known. If Ariana Grande's brother showed up, I would not even apply the word *celebrity* to him. But if he's considered a celebrity, then the answer is yes.

ON *SERIAL*

Will we get news about Adnan's appeal?
Yes. I'm going to tell you that I don't think he's staying in prison. Wherever he is in his life—that's on the move. Life becomes different. And it should be positive.

Is there more to Jay's story?
Yes. I'm not seeing a reason... I don't know if he's forgotten or he's hiding it to protect somebody else. None of those things are ringing true. Jay doesn't necessarily have specific information, but it's as though he knows somebody else who does. Because he's not weighted with a lot of guilt. He's still involved with something, he just seems to be keeping his mouth shut very well.

ON HALLOWEEN

Which film is going to get the most Halloween-costume attention: *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, *Jurassic World*, or *Mad Max: Fury Road*?
It looks like a tie between *Star Wars* and *Jurassic World*. I'm seeing a little boy—like a little fighter outfit—and old lightsabers. But it's a new stick, something fancy.

Are you seeing any other costumes that'll be popular?
It looks like the daughter from *The Beverly Hillbillies*, a country girl. I don't know if that's a character in something I don't know about, but—Elly May Clampett. And Jennifer Lawrence? Why would I be seeing her? Something in November connected with Jennifer Lawrence. I'm trying to figure out what that would be, maybe she's got something coming out? [*Ed. note: Hello, Katniss!*]

ON DEMI MOORE

I know you didn't ask and she's not a topic of conversation right now, but Demi Moore is carving out a new career. I just thought I'd throw that in there. She's just going to disappear, get focus, and come back, be a director or really do a role that brings her back.

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Entertainment WEEKLY

ADVANCE SCREENING

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David Oyelowo and Carmen Ejogo

Selma

STARRING *David Oyelowo, Carmen Ejogo, Tom Wilkinson, Tim Roth*

DIRECTED BY *Ava DuVernay*

PG-13, 2 HRS., 8 MINS.

By Chris Nashawaty

IT'S DECEMBER, which means the multiplex is once again starting to look a lot like the biography section of your local bookstore. Joining an already crowded field of Great Man movies about the likes of Stephen Hawking, Alan Turing, J.M.W. Turner, and Louie Zamperini (not to mention Moses) is Ava DuVernay's rousing biopic of slain civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., *Selma*. It isn't just the best film of the bunch, it also arrives with a raw-nerve urgency and timeliness that no one could have predicted.

Rather than chronicling the full epic sweep of King's inspirational life, from his 1929 birth in Jim Crow Atlanta to his 1968 assassination in Memphis, DuVernay and writer Paul Webb wisely zero in on one crucial chapter of King's legacy: the tinderbox three-month period in early 1965 when

ATSUSHI NISHIJIMA

he led a campaign of civil disobedience to help speed up the passage of President Johnson's Voting Rights Act. I realize that may sound like the snoozy stuff of a high school civics lesson, but as Steven Spielberg did with *Lincoln*, DuVernay brilliantly uses a micro event as a way into a larger, more compelling macro story. She makes the backroom drudgery of compromise, gamesmanship, and veiled threats burn with intimacy and intensity. Even though we know how the March on Selma will play out, we're hanging on every act of potentially deadly political theater, every speech and small gesture of defiance.

As King, British actor David Oyelowo (who played the firebrand activist son of Forest Whitaker's character in *Lee Daniels' The Butler*) miraculously rescues the flesh-and-blood man from the myth. He reveals to us the King who's not in our history books—his humor, his human failings, and his self-doubt. Just as important, he nails not only King's physical appearance and charisma but also the unique cadence of his soaring oratory. He's magnificent. And his delivery of King's "We Shall Overcome" speech toward the end of the film is guaranteed to make the hairs on your neck stand up and salute. But let's back up...

As the film opens, we're shown the everyday humiliations suffered by African-Americans in the '60s—the institutional disenfranchisement and hurdles that make the constitutional right to vote a farce. To draw media attention to this injustice, King and his fellow leaders (including Common as James Bevel, Stephan James as John Lewis, and a wonderful Carmen Ejogo as King's wife, Coretta) plan a historic, nonviolent march from Selma, Ala., to Montgomery. In the walk-up to the protest, King meets with President Johnson (Tom Wilkinson), who futilely urges him to take the slow path to progress. And as LBJ, Wilkinson makes you see the no-win pressure he was under. He's a progressive whose ideals are ahead of most of white America's and more in sync with King's than either is willing to admit. He understands the inevitability of equality, but he's also beholden to good ol' boys, such as Tim Roth's racist Alabama governor George Wallace, who helped put him in office but whose politics he can't stomach.

DuVernay, whose previous film was the 2012 indie *Middle of Nowhere*, doesn't soft-pedal the violence that led up to King's triumph. In one hauntingly staged fracas, Alabama state troopers beat King's followers with billy clubs and worse. It's sickening to watch, especially when you consider just how recent this moment in American history was. DuVernay has done a great service with *Selma*. Not only has she made one of the most powerful films of the year, she's given us a necessary reminder of what King did for this country... and how much is left to be done. **A**

Oprah Winfrey

SELMA: ATSUSHI NISHIJIMA; *WILD*: ANNE MARIE FOX

DAVID OYELOWO REVEALS TO US THE DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. WHO'S NOT IN OUR HISTORY BOOKS—HIS HUMOR, HIS HUMAN FAILINGS, AND HIS SELF-DOUBT.

THIS FILM CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING:

O	NP	CF	W	S
OPRAH	NOBEL PRIZE	CONFEDERATE FLAGS	WIRETAPS	SPIRITUALS

CRITICAL MASS

For 10 current releases, we compare EW's grade with scores averaged from IMDb, Metacritic, and Rotten Tomatoes

	EW	IMDb	METACRITIC	ROTTEN TOMATOES	AVG.
SELMA	A	66	95	100	87
BIG HERO 6	B+	83	75	89	82
FOXCATCHER	B–	78	83	86	82
WILD ↗	A–	71	75	93	80
TOP FIVE	A–	63	84	90	79
INHERENT VICE	C	82	80	72	78
THE THEORY OF EVERYTHING	B+	77	72	81	77
THE HOBBIT: THE BATTLE OF THE FIVE ARMIES	B	87	62	79	76
THE HUNGER GAMES: MOCKINGJAY—PART 1	B–	72	64	66	67
EXODUS: GODS AND KINGS	B	67	52	38	52

Christoph Waltz and Amy Adams

Big Eyes

STARRING *Amy Adams, Christoph Waltz*
DIRECTED BY *Tim Burton*
PG-13, 1 HR., 45 MINS.
By Chris Nashawaty

FOR A WHILE THERE, it was beginning to look like Tim Burton had become a prisoner of his own Tim Burton-ness. *Frankenweenie*, *Dark Shadows*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *Corpse Bride*—with the exception of 2007's *Sweeney Todd*, the past decade has felt like a dead end of the director's recycled tricks and tics. Actually, I haven't been caught off guard by one of his pictures since 1994's *Ed Wood*. With his latest, *Big Eyes*—a stranger-than-fiction story about the painter Margaret Keane—Burton has reunited with his *Ed Wood* writing team (Scott Alexander and Larry Karaszewski) and come up with his most surprisingly human film in ages. Perhaps coincidentally, it's the least recognizably Burtonesque film he's ever attempted and one of the most modestly budgeted. The radiant Amy Adams stars as Margaret, a struggling divorcée who arrives with her young daughter in late-'50s San Francisco looking to pick up the pieces from a brutal, busted marriage. Her haunting portraits of innocent, saucer-eyed waifs are regarded as kitsch by the art-world establishment (embodied by a sniffy Jason Schwartzman and an even sniffier Terence Stamp). But then she meets Walter Keane (Christoph Waltz), a fast-talking charmer who sparks to her paintings right before the rest of the world does and starts taking credit for her work. The film traces the power struggle in the Keanes' marriage and upends the June Cleaver subservience of the era as Margaret fights to reclaim the credit she's due. While I wish that Waltz would dial down his tendency to go cartoonishly broad, Adams is perfect. She makes her character's awakening a quietly aching roar of empowerment. Despite its sharp feminist sting, *Big Eyes* never loses its light touch. Maybe the lesson here is that Burton should venture out of his dark, creepy comfort zone more often. **B+**

TIM BURTON HAS COME UP WITH HIS MOST HUMAN FILM IN AGES... IT'S ALSO THE LEAST RECOGNIZABLY BURTONESQUE FILM HE'S EVER ATTEMPTED.

The Interview

STARRING *James Franco, Seth Rogen*
DIRECTED BY *Seth Rogen and Evan Goldberg*
R, 1 HR., 52 MINS.
By Joe McGovern

KIM JONG-UN, THE DEMENTED ruler of North Korea with the comical 10-gallon head, is no less a caricature in *The Interview* than his father was 10 years ago in *Team America: World Police*. Both movies understand that there's something screwball about dictators. *The Interview*'s premise—a TV host (James Franco) and his producer (Seth Rogen) are tasked with assassinating Kim—is so killer that it's caused real-life gyrations in North Korea (see story, page 16). And that's why it's a pity that the film is bereft of satiric zing, bludgeoning the laughs with a nonstop sledgehammer of bro humor. The jokes, such as one that necessitates that Rogen hide a steel canister in his rectum, are told once, then again, then a third time, then remarked upon: "That was a little embarrassing!" and "That was so funny!" Unlike in *Superbad* and *Pineapple Express*, which were written by Rogen and Evan Goldberg yet directed—crucially—by other people, the farce lacks finesse, which is especially true of Franco's assaulting, unspontaneous performance. Gesturing madly with every move, the actor doesn't deliver a single line straight. And while the idea that he might be on the receiving end of a schoolboy crush from the supreme leader of North Korea is obscenely funny, Franco unexpectedly goes nowhere with it, instead woofing lines like "I've f---ed more women than Ellen DeGeneres." A dangerous comedy about a dangerous regime shouldn't be safe for suburban dads. **C**

Diana Bang, Seth Rogen, and James Franco

THE INTERVIEW: ED ARAQUEL

Lilla Crawford

Into the Woods

STARRING *Meryl Streep, Johnny Depp, James Corden, Emily Blunt, Anna Kendrick*
DIRECTED BY *Rob Marshall*
PG, 2 HRS., 5 MINS.
By Chris Nashawaty

THERE WERE SERIOUS concerns among Stephen Sondheim fans, a notoriously rabid bunch as theater folk go, that Disney's big-screen version of the maestro's 1987 Broadway hit would pull some of its spikier punches. Well, after seeing Johnny Depp as the leering, predatory Big Bad Wolf ask Little Red Riding Hood, "*And what might be in your basket?*" they should put their worries aside. Whether the rest of Rob Marshall's musical measures up to the lip-smacking, subversive fun of that moment is another question. For the uninitiated, *Into the Woods* is a winking mash-up of some of our most beloved fairy tales, including Cinderella, Rapunzel, and Jack and the Beanstalk. And since it's a Sondheim joint, it's stuffed cheek by jowl with songs so infectiously peppy you'll be humming them for weeks. But as a movie, it ends up being too much of a good thing.

The marquee attraction, of course, is Meryl Streep as a singing witch. The good news is, she not only looks like she's having a blast, she's far better belting show tunes in a fright wig and crone's putty than she was without them in *Mamma Mia!* But the show really belongs to James Corden (a Tony winner for *One Man, Two Guvnors*) and Emily Blunt as his-and-hers bakers whose quest to track down a laundry list of mystical doodads like Little Red's cape and Jack's white cow drives the plot. They're not just adorable in their desire to reverse the witch's curse and start a family, they've also got impressive pipes. As for the rest of the cast, we already knew that Anna Kendrick (as Cinderella) could sing, but who could have guessed Chris Pine could too—all while hilariously sending up his hunky image as a charmingly insincere prince? He looks like he just waltzed in from a Siegfried & Roy tribute act.

The first two-thirds of the film, which are like the Brothers Grimm's Greatest Hits on laughing gas, have a fizzy, fairy-dust energy. But as soon as the baker couple's scavenger hunt is over and a rampaging giant appears, *Woods* loses its magic and momentum and sags like an airless balloon. For a movie so hip to the conventions of fairy tales, it sure doesn't know when to cut to happily ever after. **B–**

MERYL'S FIRST WITCH

Meryl Streep has played everyone from a Holocaust survivor to a high-fashion editrix, but never one of those cackling old ladies standing beside a boiling cauldron. "I've been offered many witches over the years, starting when I was 40," says Streep, 65. "It was the default place for casting women over 40. I said no to all of them." So what made her say yes to *Into the Woods,* in which she portrays a wrinkled enchantress seeking a potion that will transform her into her younger self? "This was really fun because it plays with the big notion of what witches mean," she says. "They represent age and ugliness and scary powers we don't understand. So it was my opportunity to say, 'Here's what you wish for when you're getting old—that you'll be beautiful again and young.' Because a woman's value is in how she looks." Beyond the commentary, Streep also felt duty-bound to the actresses who have portrayed the iconic role on stage. "I saw the great Bernadette Peters in this part, and there's nothing else like it. So it was a thrill...and a responsibility." *—Marc Snetiker*

PETER MOUNTAIN (2)

American Sniper

STARRING *Bradley Cooper, Sienna Miller*
DIRECTED BY *Clint Eastwood*
R, 2 HRS., 12 MINS.
By Chris Nashawaty

CLINT EASTWOOD'S *American Sniper* is a film that evokes complicated emotions. A month after seeing it, you might still be wrestling with whether it's powerful, profound, or propaganda. Maybe that shouldn't be surprising. After all, Eastwood is a guy who built his career on the paradox of violence—the early shoot-'em-ups followed by the late Saul-on-the-road-to-Damascus conversion of *Unforgiven*. But he seems to want it both ways with *American Sniper*, a movie that treats killing with videogame impersonality, then tries all too quickly to reckon with the psychological fallout of those acts.

Written by Jason Hall, the film is an account of the Iraq war as seen through the crosshairs of Navy SEAL Chris Kyle, the real-life sniper whose four tours made him the most lethal marksman in U.S. history. Played by a bulked-up Bradley Cooper, Kyle has a patriotic cowboy swagger and keeps others, including his wife (Sienna Miller), at a distance—an ideal personality trait for someone who shoots from afar. As muddled as the film's message is at times, what's undeniable is the white-knuckle force of its opening scene. Kyle is perched on a rooftop when an Iraqi mother and child walk into the road. They seem harmless. But then the woman pulls out something that may or may not be a grenade and hands it to her son. In that terrifying split second, Kyle has to decide whether to pull the trigger. The rest of *American Sniper* could've used more of that moral ambiguity. But we hardly get to know how Kyle feels about what he does. (Where's his "It's a hell of a thing, killing a man" *Unforgiven* moment?) Instead, the film's just a repetition of context-free combat missions and one-dimensional targets. It isn't until the last half hour, when Kyle returns home haunted by his experience, that Eastwood finally tries to get under his hero's skin. It's too little, too late. **C+**

Kyle Gallner and Bradley Cooper

Richard Armitage and Martin Freeman

The Hobbit: The Battle of The Five Armies

STARRING *Martin Freeman, Ian McKellen, Richard Armitage*
DIRECTED BY *Peter Jackson*
PG-13, 2 HRS., 24 MINS.
By Chris Nashawaty

CONSIDERING HOW SLIM the actual book was, Peter Jackson sure has taken his sweet-ass time getting to the end of *The Hobbit*. It's starting to feel like we're witnessing the events of Middle-earth unfold in real time. Still, it's a testament to his skill as a big-canvas storyteller that we keep coming back, hungry for more. He's managed to orchestrate the three-part saga like the world's canniest *D&D* dungeon master. When we last left off, our pint-size heroes had just unleashed the Cumberbatchian wrath of the dragon Smaug. Seventy-seven-year-old spoiler alert: The fire-breathing beastie is offed by Bard (Luke Evans), which allows the dwarves to return to the mountain keep of Erebor. There, untold piles of gold and priceless baubles are tucked away, the promise of which soon turns the dwarf ringleader Thorin (Richard Armitage) into a blindly greedy monster not unlike Humphrey Bogart in *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*. Everybody wants a cut of the spoils—the elves, the orcs, a pig-riding Billy Connolly. And they all descend on Erebor armed to the teeth and itching for a battle royal.

Like everything else in Jackson's Tolkienland, the buildup to the climactic melee stretches on too long. But when it comes, it's a doozy. Maybe not on the same epic scale as *The Two Towers*' Battle of Helm's Deep, but a doozy nonetheless. It packs a giddy blast of childlike wonder and chin-in-your-lap awe. While more than enough praise has been poured on Jackson and his singular gift for CG spectacle, Martin Freeman deserves some credit for lending humor and humanity to what could have been a numbing orgy of pixelated mayhem. His furry-footed Bilbo has been the trilogy's secret weapon, the beating heart behind the blockbuster. And as Bilbo finally settles in at the Shire with a good book and a whopper of a tale to tell, he can rest easy knowing that he will be missed. **B**

PETER JACKSON HAS MANAGED TO ORCHESTRATE THE THREE-PART SAGA LIKE THE WORLD'S CANNIEST *D&D* DUNGEON MASTER.

THE HOBBIT: THE BATTLE OF THE FIVE ARMIES: WARNER BROS. PICTURES

Jack O'Connell

Unbroken

STARRING *Jack O'Connell, Domhnall Gleeson*
DIRECTED BY *Angelina Jolie*
PG-13, 2 HRS., 17 MINS.
By Chris Nashawaty

FOR SOMEONE who exudes such edgy unpredictability in front of the camera, Angelina Jolie is a bit square behind it. With *Unbroken*, her second feature as a director, she turns the undeniably inspiring true story of Louie Zamperini into an oddly old-fashioned drama. It's gorgeously shot and beautifully acted, and it has moments of heartbreaking poignancy, but it's also nearly suffocated by its own nobility. Based on Laura Hillenbrand's 2010 best-seller, *Unbroken* chronicles the extraordinary life of a man who grew up as the hell-raising son of Italian immigrants, ran for the U.S. at the 1936 Olympics, and was shot down over the Pacific in WWII.

The story, adapted by a small army of A-list writers (Richard LaGravenese, William Nicholson, and Joel and Ethan Coen), kicks off with a dizzying sense of immediacy. We're thrown right into the belly of a B-24 bomber as Zamperini (British actor Jack O'Connell) and his crew take fire from Japanese fighters. It's a hell of an opening sequence. But then Jolie downshifts, flashing back to Zamperini's childhood, and the film loses its steam as Louie's older brother spouts portentous clichés ("A moment of pain is worth a lifetime of glory") intended to get him to make something of himself. It works. Louie becomes a high school track star who's headed to the Olympics. Meanwhile, to signal to the audience to sit tight, Jolie keeps cutting back to the B-24 as if to say, "Don't worry, the good stuff's coming."

When the film finally does catch up to Louie's ditch into the ocean, it finds its harrowing groove again. Louie and two other survivors (Domhnall Gleeson and Finn Wittrock) scramble into a raft where they try to fight off the sun, sharks, and starvation. Discovered by the enemy after 47 days, Louie is sent to a Japanese prison camp run by a sadistic warden (Miyavi), who singles him out for torture. And Jolie, who's learned a thing or two about the inexplicable horrors of war in her work with the U.N., doesn't skimp on Louie's abuse. Still, there's a strange feeling of both too much and not enough with *Unbroken*. O'Connell, a real star on the rise who bristled with mad-dog menace in the recent prison drama *Starred Up*, is totally hypnotic. And the physical deprivation he underwent for the role is impressive. I just wish that Jolie's film had the same rawness. Instead, it's moving, admirable, and occasionally exhilarating. What it's missing is the one thing that could always be counted on with Jolie as a star: the spark of danger. **B–**

Movie Math

Let's break down the formula for Angelina Jolie's survival epic

A Bronx Tale

+

Chariots of Fire

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Jaws

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The Bridge on the River Kwai

=

UNBROKEN

A BRONX TALE, JAWS: EVERETT COLLECTION (2); CHARIOTS OF FIRE: © 20TH CENTURY FOX/EVERETT COLLECTION; THE BRIDGE ON THE RIVER KWAI: COLUMBIA PICTURES/PHOTOFEST

Mark Wahlberg

The Gambler

STARRING *Mark Wahlberg, Brie Larson, John Goodman, Jessica Lange*
DIRECTED BY *Rupert Wyatt*
R, 1 HR., 51 MINS.
By Chris Nashawaty

EVEN IF you've never seen James Caan's dazzling 1974 version of *The Gambler* (see sidebar), you'll probably walk out of the remake assuming the original was better. Almost anything would have to be. Miscast, misguided, and a missed opportunity on just about every level, Rupert Wyatt's overly slick underworld thriller about a literature professor with a spiraling-out-of-control betting addiction is one of the bigger disappointments of the holiday season. For a film about gambling, it's strangely averse to risk. The missteps start at the top. Mark Wahlberg can be raw and vulnerable in the right role, but he's never believable as the self-destructive scholar Jim Bennett. It isn't just the laughably unconvincing way he interacts with his students in the classroom; it bleeds over into the moments that are supposed to give the film a dark, after-hours punch. In one early scene, Bennett shows up at an illegal high-roller casino up in the hills overlooking the Pacific. He walks up to a blackjack table and coolly blows through $80,000 as if it's nothing. Maybe it is, maybe it isn't: Wahlberg's face is such a blank you can't tell. In the earlier film, as Caan was sinking deeper and deeper into an existential black hole, he at least gave you a glimpse of the death-wish high he was chasing. You felt sick watching him lose. But Wahlberg is a cipher. After he's borrowed more money and squandered that, too, the walls start closing in on him. He's on the hook to the sorts of people you don't want to owe money to, like John Goodman's chrome-domed loan shark (one of the movie's few highlights). Scrambling to raise cash, Bennett hits up his disapproving wealthy mother (Jessica Lange, who can do icy in her sleep), falls into bed with one of his students (Brie Larson, in a thankless role), and dodges an endless volley of knuckle-dragging goons. It's all so formulaic and flat, you'd think that screenwriter William Monahan would at least stick to the original's boldly bleak non-Hollywood ending, right? Guess again. The one bit of good news is that the first *Gambler* is currently streaming on Netflix. Do yourself a favor and watch that one instead. **C–**

THE ONLY *GAMBLER* YOU NEED TO SEE

Director Karel Reisz's *The Gambler* is a movie that's distinctly of its time. From the grim, downbeat ending to the open-to-the-navel polyester-shirt machismo, this underseen 1974 film is a classic reminder of a decade when Hollywood wasn't afraid of the dark. Based on a semiautobiographical script by James Toback, *The Gambler* not only has a masochistic sense of dead-end dread, it remains one of the few films to really capture the dizzying psychological highs and lows of betting addiction. Just coming off *The Godfather*, James Caan stars as Axel Freed, a hip, hotheaded college professor with a habit of losing money hand over fist. Roulette, college basketball—if there's any chance for a payoff (or oblivion), he wants action on it. One of the things I love most about the film is how it uses the kinds of disheveled, blue-collar character actors you don't see much anymore (Burt Young, Vic Tayback, Paul Sorvino). Their faces alone give the film a gruff authenticity that makes a movie like *Rounders* look like *The Little Rascals*. In the most thrilling scene (though it's hard to pick just one), Axel takes his girlfriend (Lauren Hutton) to Vegas, where he catches a ridiculous hot streak at the blackjack table. He's got thousands riding on each hand and he's dealt an 18 against the dealer's 20. Instead of admitting defeat, he doubles down just for the rush. It's sick and stupid and, just like stumbling onto a car wreck, you can't look away for a second. —*Chris Nashawaty* **A** **I** **N**

James Caan

WAHLBERG: CLAIRE FOLGER; CAAN: EVERETT COLLECTION

KEY **A** = On Amazon Instant Video **I** = On iTunes **N** = On Netflix streaming

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YOU AND ME
FREE TO BE FOUNDATION INC.

Lily James, Michelle Dockery, and Laura Carmichael

NICK BRIGGS

Downton Abbey

*Premieres Sunday, Jan. 4, 9 p.m.**

PBS

By Melissa Maerz

COULD *DOWNTON ABBEY* just be a secret ploy to make PBS-supporting viewers right-wing? That's what a British economist argued earlier this year on *Fox & Friends*, and some left-leaning critics have echoed his thoughts, insisting that the drama punishes women who have sex out of wedlock and servants who aspire beyond their station, while also reassuring viewers that today, we've left those pesky 20th-century problems of class, race, and gender inequality behind. Well, it's getting harder to make that claim. Proper ladies might find themselves shocked—*shocked!*—at how modern this period drama is getting.

In *Downton*'s fifth season there's as much talk as ever about "change." It's 1924, a new Labour prime minister has just been elected, and he's making a speech on this newfangled radio contraption—called a "wireless," though it certainly wasn't being used to stream dubstep remixes on Spotify. Lord Grantham (Hugh Bonneville) worries that it's the end times for rich folks and their traditionalist ways. He might be right. Suddenly Edith (Laura Carmichael) is boldly visiting her love child, who's being raised by kindly farmer Mr. Drewe (Andrew Scarborough) and his wife, and Mary (Michelle Dockery) is joining Lord Gillingham (Tom Cullen) for a weekend getaway that requires certain *precautions*. The ensuing conversations about who has the right to birth control are so timely, it's hard to feel smug about how far we've come as a society.

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*check local listings

Such tiny rebellions aren't exactly radical, but for the first time they're fairly public, and it's nice to watch these tightly laced fuddy-duddies defy convention. There's great satisfaction in hearing Daisy (Sophie McShera), who's studying mathematics with the goal of middle-class employment, inform Lord Grantham in full view of his dinner guests that she won't be his servant forever. Sweet insubordination! But the biggest thrill comes from Violet (Maggie Smith), who nurses a crush on a grizzled Russian man (Rade Šerbedžija) who flirted with her before she was married. Good heavens! Maybe Violet's youth *wasn't* such a far cry from the Roaring '20s—though she does go on to claim that when she was Mary's age, "a lady was incapable of physical attraction until she was instructed by her mamaw."

PROPER LADIES MIGHT FIND THEMSELVES SHOCKED AT HOW MODERN THIS PERIOD DRAMA IS GETTING.

Spoilsports who insist on historical accuracy should rest assured that this really was an era of romantic freedom for women. In light of Lady Mary's story, the historian Emily Brand recently wrote that after men returned from World War I there was a public "sexual awakening" in England, with "sex manuals, novels, public discussion about birth control and increasing attention on the nature of female sexuality." That's good news for Downton residents and fans. Beyond the sloggy *Mistah Bates!* scandal, which still gets too much attention, it's a relief to find no secret rapes or pregnancy shame (yet) this season. It's time for these proper ladies to have some proper fun. **A–**

NICK BRIGGS (3)

Actress Sophie McShera in the kitchen on *Downton Abbey*

Downton's Edible Arrangements

Food stylist Lisa Heathcote concocts the culinary delights for the Crawleys of *Downton Abbey* and the MacKenzies of Starz's *Outlander*. With the *Masterpiece* series starting its fifth season, she dishes on the process behind her dishes. —ESTHER ZUCKERMAN

› Heathcote devises full menus for the dinner scenes on *Downton*.
"When they are actually sitting at the table, they've all got a menu in front of them. Then we basically decide at what point they are in the dinner, what course we're actually going to see. The rest of the meal is imaginary. But it might be that in the course of the story line we see Mrs. Patmore preparing for this dinner. We might not see what she's preparing go upstairs, but to make sense of it she's preparing what they would have eaten in that dinner so that it corresponds."

› But the actors aren't always eating rich meats and decadent puddings.
"I've got to make it pleasant for them to eat because they are going to be eating it all day long. I can't be too fussy with a sauce. I'm designing food that's going to look good on the plate and catch the camera's eye, but when they are eating there is going to be something like a piece of watercress or cucumber, something quite simple, that the actor can just constantly be eating."

› As suspected, downstairs is more fun than upstairs—at least when it comes to the food.
"[When food stays in the kitchen] I call that my 'passing food.' It's just passing through shots. I don't have to worry about any problems with actors possibly not being able to eat it. It could be a nice big old wobbly jelly that could just be plunked down or some wonderful grouse or quail. Often the scene around the table does involve the actors saying their lines and having to get some food off a platter and onto their dinner plate. I can't do anything too complicated."

› Heathcote never stops doing her research.
"I went to the British National Archives this year. I also have some old Buckingham Palace menus. I'm quite often in junk shops—you can find old menus."

› *Outlander* is a different beast from *Downton*.
"It's a lot more rugged. With *Downton*, everything's set in aspic. It's all very glossy, whereas *Outlander* is out-there. They're wearing big kilts and they've got big hunks of meat with feet and beaks and all that. It's great. It's really fun."

Mozart in The Jungle

10 Episodes Streaming, Dec. 23

AMAZON PRIME INSTANT VIDEO

By Jeff Jensen

THE LATEST TALENT-RICH, lo-fi binge from Amazon Studios falls far short of the high notes hit by the upstart TV player's sublime dramedy *Transparent*, but it's pleasing enough to hold you. Gael García Bernal charms as Rodrigo, a charismatic conductor with a rock-star image and a poet's soul recruited to recharge the New York Symphony. His platonic (for now?) relationship with aspiring oboist Hailey (Lola Kirke), whom he hires as an assistant, is endearing, and by the standout seventh episode, you'll be hooked on their rapport and keen to see how they change each other over time.

Before then, though, faith will be tested. *Mozart* is adapted from a 2005 memoir of the same name, but initially you wonder if the producers stopped reading after the book's *Sex, Drugs, and Classical Music* subtitle. The show seems to think the mere idea of highbrow symphony pros humping, toking, and generally being lowbrow is, like, irreverently hilarious! It gets stale quickly. Early eps focus on Rodrigo's rivalry with the maestro (Malcolm McDowell) he's replaced, but it feels forced and ultimately fizzles. Relationships and conflicts are suggested, tested, then fade away, as if the writers lost interest or didn't trust them. I was ready to give up after some lame *Cops Are A--holes!* business in episode 6, but the seventh episode, a minor-key Fellini homage, won me back, thanks to inspired direction from Roman Coppola and dream-logic storytelling that digs deeper into the characters. Here, finally, *Mozart* makes some beautiful music. Hopefully it can carry the tune forward. **B–**

Malcolm McDowell, Bernadette Peters, and Gael García Bernal

BLACK MIRROR SERVES UP CHRISTMAS HAMM

It's been called the U.K.'s answer to *The Twilight Zone*, and now you can finally watch it Stateside on Netflix. Here's what you need to know about the buzzy, bizarro *Black Mirror*—including a preview of the Jon Hamm-starring Christmas special (airing on DirecTV Dec. 25 at 9:30 p.m.). —CLARK COLLIS

Drop the name *Black Mirror* into conversation and you tend to get one of two reactions: "Oh my God, that's one of my favorite shows!" or "Oh my God, what are you talking about?" The chasm between these two responses is understandable. Created by *Guardian* columnist Charlie Brooker, *Black Mirror* is a technology-obsessed British anthology series that debuted in the U.K. in December 2011. As of this month, the show's two brief seasons are available to watch on Netflix, but prior to that, *Black Mirror* could be legally viewed only on DirecTV's Audience Network. Yet the people who found and liked *Black Mirror* tended to *really* like *Black Mirror*—and some of those people are really famous. In February 2013, Robert Downey Jr.'s production company, Team Downey, announced that it had acquired the film rights to a season 1 episode called "The Entire History of You," about a microchip that allows owners to play back everything they see. "This episode interlaces technological advancements, human nature, and voyeurism, which inspired us to focus on creating a paranoid thriller in the vein of *Three Days of the Condor* or *The Conversation*, but with a modern twist," explains Susan

MOZART IN THE JUNGLE: AMAZON STUDIOS; *BLACK MIRROR*: HAL SHINNIE

(Clockwise from far left) Jon Hamm, Oona Chaplin, and Rafe Spall star in *Black Mirror*'s Christmas special

Downey, the actor's wife and cofounder of Team Downey. Meanwhile, a new Christmas special, which DirecTV will air on Dec. 25, stars none other than Don Draper himself, Jon Hamm. The *Mad Men* actor was tipped off about *Black Mirror* by buddy Bill Hader. "I watched all of them," Hamm recalls. "What I like is that you can point to any one moment in any of the episodes and find something fantastically compelling about it. And yet they really have nothing in common from a story standpoint."

Brooker dreamed up the series after his first foray into the fantastical, 2008's *Dead Set*—which followed fictional contestants on the U.K. *Big Brother* trying to survive a zombie apocalypse—won critical raves. "The one thing that I always wanted to do was a *Twilight Zone*-type show," he says. "I'd been reading a lot about Rod Serling and how he was trying to tackle issues like McCarthyism and paranoia. And I thought, 'Well, what are we worried about today?' And I suddenly realized that my face was being reflected in a screen as I was reading off a device of some nature. I thought, 'That's it—that's the thing that's swept in and changed all our lives in the last five years.'"

Hamm ended up meeting Brooker in London while doing press for his film *Million Dollar Arm*. "He said he was working on this Christmas special and he said, 'Maybe I could make this guy American,'" says the actor. "I said, 'I sure would like that.'" The resulting new episode is composed of three bite-size tales, including a Facebook-inspired yarn in which people can "block" other folks in real life. "Like a lot of *Black Mirror* ideas, that sounds like it would be useful," says Brooker. "But actually that would remove the ability to ever build bridges with somebody, or ever communicate."

Since the series' Netflix debut, Brooker says the buzz surrounding *Black Mirror* in America has grown substantially. "Suddenly I've been aware of a lot of noise," he says. "Like, Stephen King tweeted about it. That was probably my best moment." Brooker promises more *Black Mirror* is in the pipeline—given our increasing embrace of ever more advanced tech, he's unlikely to run out of material anytime soon. "Exactly," he laughs. "Which is fortunate for *Black Mirror*—but unfortunate for the world."

Season's Watchings

EW staffers find themselves in an unusual position while home for the holidays: at the mercy of another's remote. Oh, the ho-ho-horror! Here's what the fam forces us to watch.

There's more than one way to skin a cat, but there are more than 10 ways to skin beavers, coyotes, and mountain lions. I know this from watching the History channel's ***Mountain Men***—a reality show that follows survivalists who eschew modern comforts—with my dad, who really loves his modern, comfortable recliner. It sure beats hunting for healthy food among the Cheetos in the cabinet! —DANIELLE NUSSBAUM

When my mother and I aren't busy correcting family members' grammar, we like to turn off our brains and turn on ***America's Funniest Home Videos***. If the choice is to exchange hopes and dreams for the new year or to cackle at a montage of swans attacking children trying to pet them, we'll ring out the old one with angry birds. —DAN SNIERSON

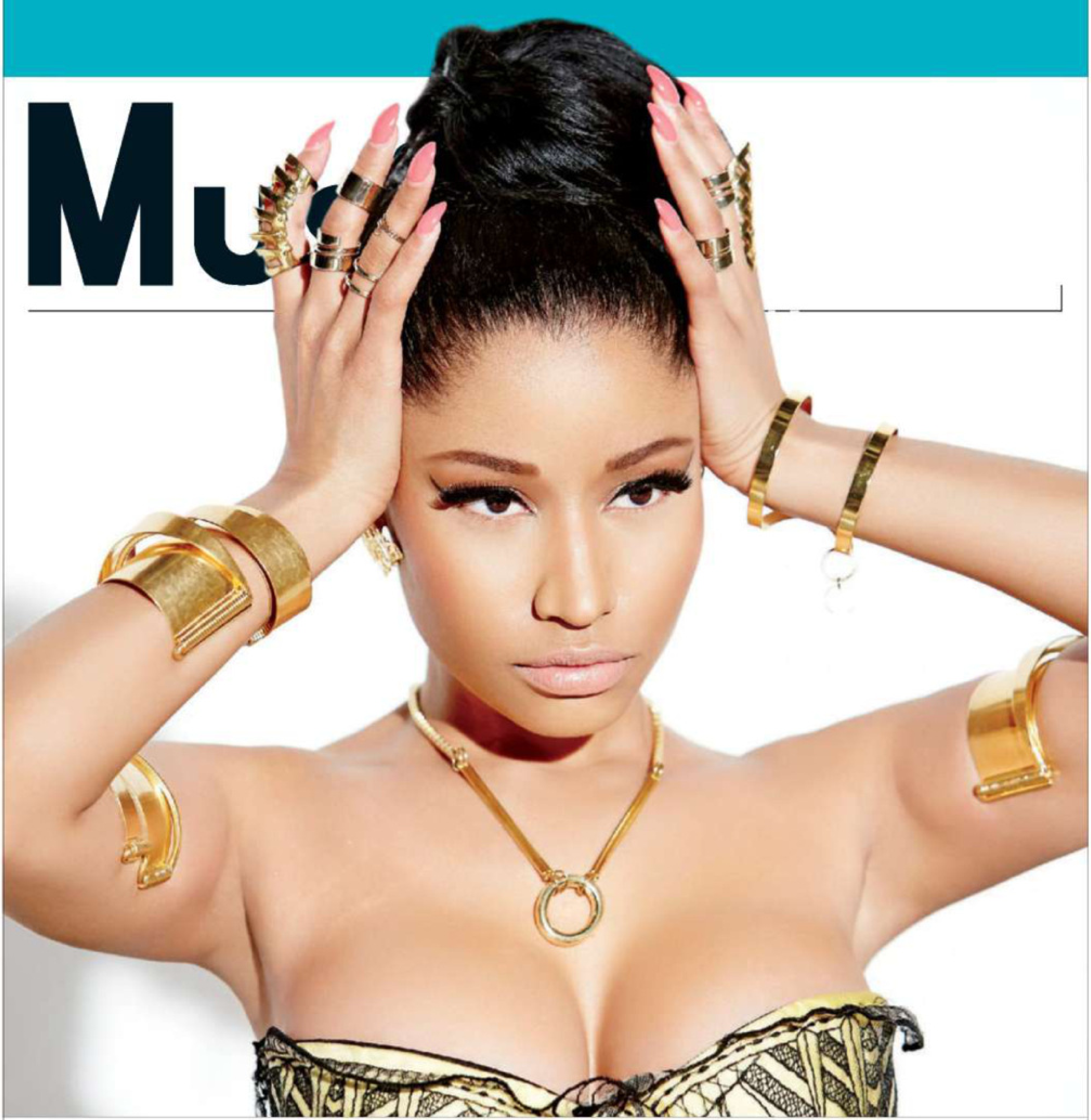
There are a few guarantees at home: There will be no food in the fridge, my dog will take my spot on the couch, and my mom will watch ***Ghost Hunters***. She's a big believer in the supernatural and considers it the only "legit" ghost show. It *is* entertaining. And if I watch, she'll watch my fave supernatural show (which is, in fact, *Supernatural*). —SAMANTHA HIGHFILL

My mom is incredibly loyal. To friends, to family—even to TV. A longtime fan of ***The View***, she DVRs it every day. To spare my dad, she watches it after he's gone to bed, and when I'm home, I inevitably join her. The show? It makes me insane. Having an excuse to gossip and split a bottle of wine with my mom? I dig it. Thanks, ladies. —STEPHANIE SCHOMER

Rule No. 32: "Never steal the remote from your mom on Christmas." And so it was I began my love-hate affair with Gibbs and his team on ***NCIS***. While I'd never admit it under oath, the scales have been tipping in the show's favor the past few years, to the point where I'm more than a little curious as to how the gang is faring without Ziva. —AMY WILKINSON

BLACK MIRROR: HAL SHINNIE (2); *MOUNTAIN MEN*: WARM SPRINGS PRODUCTIONS/HISTORY; *AMERICA'S FUNNIEST HOME VIDEOS*: MICHAEL ANSELL/ABC; *GHOST HUNTERS*: BARBARA NITKE/SYFY; *THE VIEW*: FRED LEE/ABC; *NCIS*: MICHAEL YARISH/CBS

Mu



Nicki Minaj

The Pinkprint

HIP-HOP (YOUNG MONEY/ CASH MONEY)

By Kyle Anderson

GIVE NICKI MINAJ CREDIT for having the ladyballs to call her third full-length *The Pinkprint*, a clear reference to Jay Z's career-defining 2001 masterpiece *The Blueprint*. Every star needs a healthy amount of brazen self-confidence, but few rappers have dared to charge Jigga head-on like this. The thing about *Blueprint*, though, is that it was a laser-guided declaration of purpose. *Pinkprint*, however, largely fails to answer the question "Who is Nicki Minaj?"

She began her career as a scene-stealing mixtape guest, then rose to a razor-tongued heiress of Lil' Kim's filthy throne before morphing into a neon dance-floor queen. (That's the Nicki who blasted up the charts with "Starships.") This time around, she's gunning for the sort of

Big Statement torch currently wielded not by Jay but by his Mrs., and it's no surprise that one of the album's strongest tracks is the Beyoncé tag team "Feeling Myself." It's a telling juxtaposition: In one corner, Bey effortlessly big-ups the impact of her kamikaze album release ("Changed the game with that digital drop/Know where you was when that digital popped") and brags about being able to "stop the world." Opposite her, Minaj sounds like she's struggling just to keep up. That would be an unfair comparison if Nicki didn't invite it herself, filling her album with bargain-bin versions of Bey's chest-thumping bids at personal empowerment.

Minaj is at her best when she's a little bit unhinged; that's the zone where the magic happens. But *Pinkprint* slogs through too many ponderous piano ballads, and it's a shame, because there are moments here that give flashes of that mad brilliance. Her fluidity allows her to dip excellently into both island riddims ("Trini Dem Girls") and icy trip-hop revivalism ("Four Door Aventador") while still maintaining her hardcore bona fides ("Only"). Minaj clearly wants to be thought of as a singularity, but she's less an iconoclast than a fractured simulacrum—Frankenstein's monster haphazardly stitching herself together without a blueprint. **C**

BEST TRACKS
BEST TRACKS

FEELING MYSELF
SONG TITLE
A swag-for-days duet with Beyonce
A little quip about this song

TRINI DEM GIRLS
PERFECT DAY
A block-party starter
Short little ditty

Pink Pals

Nicki name-checks a motley crew of stars and C-listers on her latest

Kevin Hart

Katy Perry

Shia LaBeouf

Kate Gosselin

Alexander McQueen

Monica Lewinsky

Bill Bellamy

Eminem

Floyd Mayweather

CHART FLASHBACK

Twenty years ago, "Here Comes the Hotstepper" ruled on pop's Hot 100, but the top of the Alternative chart got merry with zombies, dolls, and supernovas. —**KYLE ANDERSON**

1 R.E.M. "Bang and Blame" Released only months before a massive tour that sent three-quarters of the band to the hospital, this fuzzy jangler was the beginning of the end of R.E.M.'s reign as one of the planet's biggest rock bands. **B+**

2 GREEN DAY "When I Come Around" Considering how simple this arena-punk anthem is—just three thrashing chords and Billie Joe Armstrong's sweetly adenoidal snarl—it's surprising that it inspired an infamously epic mud fight at Woodstock '94. Maybe all those neo-hippies just hated wallet chains? **A–**

3 WEEZER "Buddy Holly" Two decades on, Rivers Cuomo still looks like Buddy Holly, and we're forever Mary Tyler Moore. **A**

4 PEARL JAM "Better Man" Imagine for a moment that Eddie Vedder's obsession of choice in the mid-'90s was conjuring shaggily brilliant ballads like this, rather than going to war with Ticketmaster and always looking like he was warding off a migraine. Life would be at least, say, 26 percent better, right? **A–**

5 NIRVANA "About a Girl" One of Kurt Cobain's last hits was an *MTV Unplugged* resurrection of the purest pop song he ever wrote—and another heartbreaking reminder of what might have been. **A–**

6 THE CRANBERRIES "Zombie" How are the Cranberries like Rage Against the Machine? They both persuaded American teenagers to care about politics for three minutes at a time. How are they different? Every other way-ay-ay-ay-oh. **C+**

7 HOLE "Doll Parts" Though Hole's breakthrough *Live Through This* had its snarling bile-purges like "Violet" and "Miss World," Courtney Love was unforgettably the girl with the most cake on her gently strummed manifesto: "I fake it so real I am beyond fake." **B+**

8 STONE TEMPLE PILOTS "Interstate Love Song" Their first album still sounds way too much like grunge taking a champagne soak in a hot tub, but STP transcended their come-lately status with this California dream of a hook. **A**

9 SMASHING PUMPKINS "Landslide" When people complain about the whininess of Billy Corgan's voice, they're probably thinking of him bashing Fleetwood Mac's classic into submission. **C–**

10 LIZ PHAIR "Supernova" A whirring, melodic mash note featuring the immortal come-on "Your lips are sweet and slippery like a cherub's bare red ass"—the Tinder right-swipe of the *Reality Bites* era. **B**

(Above) Liz Phair, Stone Temple Pilots, R.E.M., and Hole

PHAIR: JEFF KRAVITZ/FILMMAGIC.COM; STONE TEMPLE PILOTS: MITCHELL GERBER/CORBIS; R.E.M.: JAY BLAKESBERG/RETNA; HOLE: JEFF DAVY/RETNA LTD.; HART: GILBERT CARRASQUILLO/GC IMAGES; PERRY: EPA/DAN HIMBRECHTS AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND OUT/LANDOV; LABEOUF: LARRY BUSACCA/GETTY IMAGES; GOSSELIN: KRISTINA BUMPHREY/STARTRAKSPHOTO; MCQUEEN: RICHARD YOUNG/REX USA; LEWINSKY: DPA/LANDOV; BELLAMY: STEVE GRANITZ/WIREIMAGE.COM; EMINEM: JAMIE MCCARTHY/GETTY IMAGES; MAYWEATHER: JOHNNY NUNEZ/GETTY IMAGES

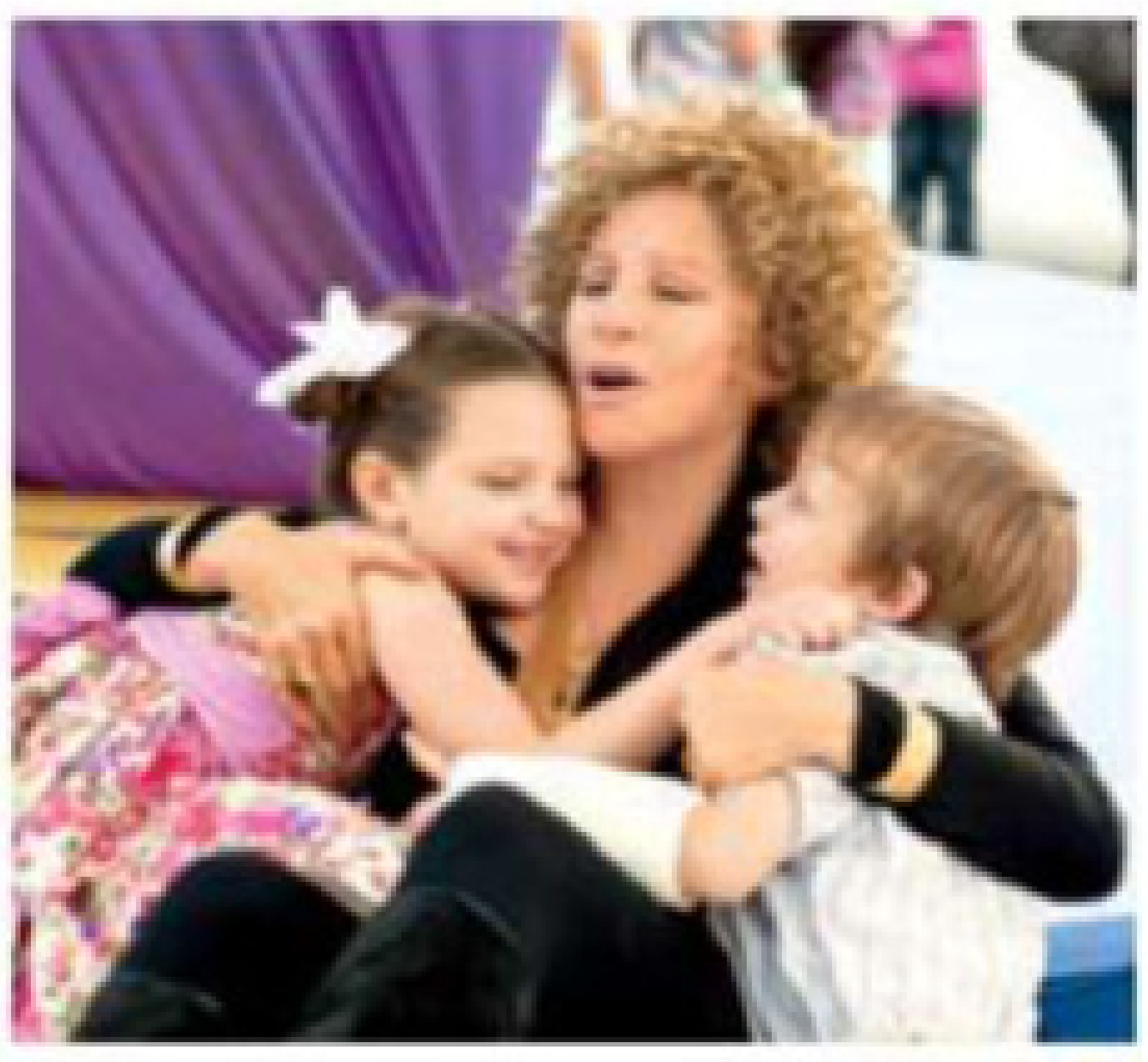
BY THE NUMBAHS!

BARBRA STREISAND

Babs' recent album, the duets blockbuster *Partners*, is merely the latest on a long list of manicured victories. Want to learn more about the Way She Were? Read on. —**MOLLY SIMMS**

0

Number of times she claims she has seen her 2010 film, ***Little Fockers***, in its entirety



$310 MILLION

HOW MUCH *LITTLE FOCKERS* EARNED WORLDWIDE

8

Number of reported lovahs who are Academy Award nominees or winners

+

One

Number of lovahs who were Canadian prime ministers (Pierre Trudeau)

3

NUMBER OF DUETS SHE'S RECORDED WITH BEAUX

"You're the Top"
RYAN O'NEAL

"Lost Inside of You"
KRIS KRISTOFFERSON

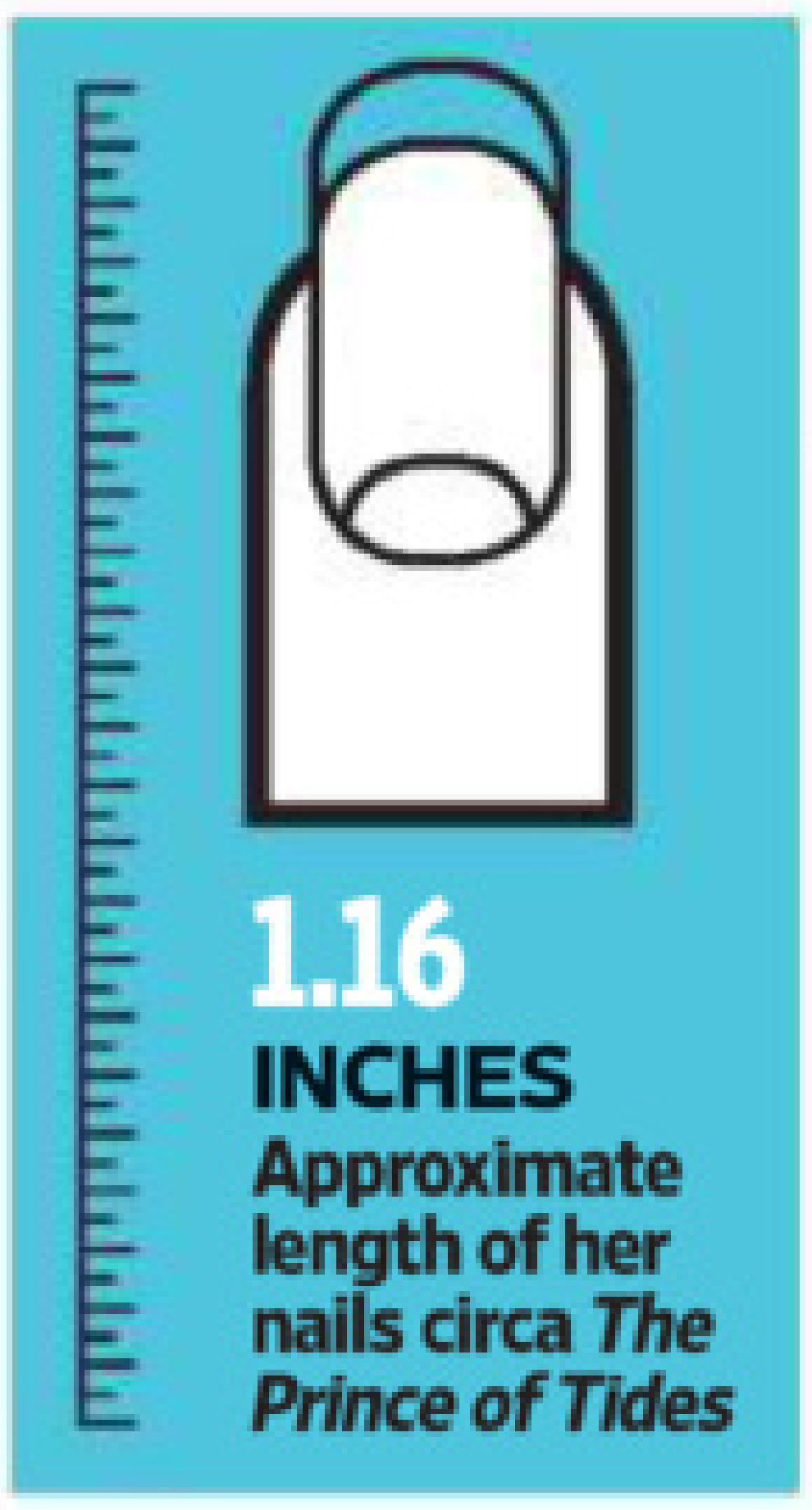
"Till I Loved You"
DON JOHNSON

72 Million+

ALBUMS SOLD IN THE U.S.

76 SECONDS

How long she held a human heart in a December 2014 episode of *Dr. Oz*



1.16 INCHES

Approximate length of her nails circa *The Prince of Tides*

Forty-One YEARS

How long Babs' personal assistant, **Renata Buser**, has worked for her

13

Age at which she recorded her **first demos** in 1955. She's the only artist to have **No. 1 albums in each of the following six decades.**

27

NUMBER OF YEARS SHE STOPPED PERFORMING IN PUBLIC DUE TO STAGE FRIGHT (SHE RETURNED IN 1993)

FIVE

Number of **"stores"** she created in her Malibu estate's basement, which is filled entirely with her antiques and collectibles

SIXTY

Number of weeks that ***Buyer & Cellar***, Jonathan Tolins' play about a fictional employee of said basement mall, ran Off Broadway

TOP FIVE BABS SONGS*

1. "The Way We Were"
2. "Evergreen (A Star Is Born)"
3. "People"
4. "You Don't Bring Me Flowers"
5. "Don't Rain on My Parade"

1

Number of **séances** she conducted to determine whether her deceased father wanted her to make **1983's *Yentl***. (He did.)

47 YEARS

GAP BETWEEN HER **1967** JOHNNY CARSON *TONIGHT SHOW* APPEARANCE AND HER NEXT LATE-NIGHT INTERVIEW (WITH JIMMY FALLON IN **2014**)

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*According to a poll of 100 people at Rockefeller Center

STREISAND: STEVE SCHAPIRO/CORBIS; *LITTLE FOCKERS*: GLEN WILSON; OSCAR STATUETTE: OSCAR® STATUETTE © AMPAS®; O'NEAL: EVERETT COLLECTION; KRISTOFFERSON: RON GALELLA LTD./WIREIMAGE.COM; JOHNSON: NBC/GETTY IMAGES

A Jo Bro Goes Rogue

2014's been good to **Nick Jonas**: The singer-actor, 22, scored his first solo top 10 hit, "Jealous," and starred on the DirecTV drama *Kingdom*. He talks to EW about growing up, getting fit, and taking it all off. —MOLLY SIMMS

We saw you in a much more "adult" light this year. Was that a conscious choice, or did it just sort of evolve?
It happened naturally over the course of three or four years. I was not as predominantly in the public eye as I am at this moment, which was by choice in a lot of ways—just taking time to grow and figure out who I am as an artist and as a performer and a writer and all that. It's been pretty insane to be bold like that and try to push myself.

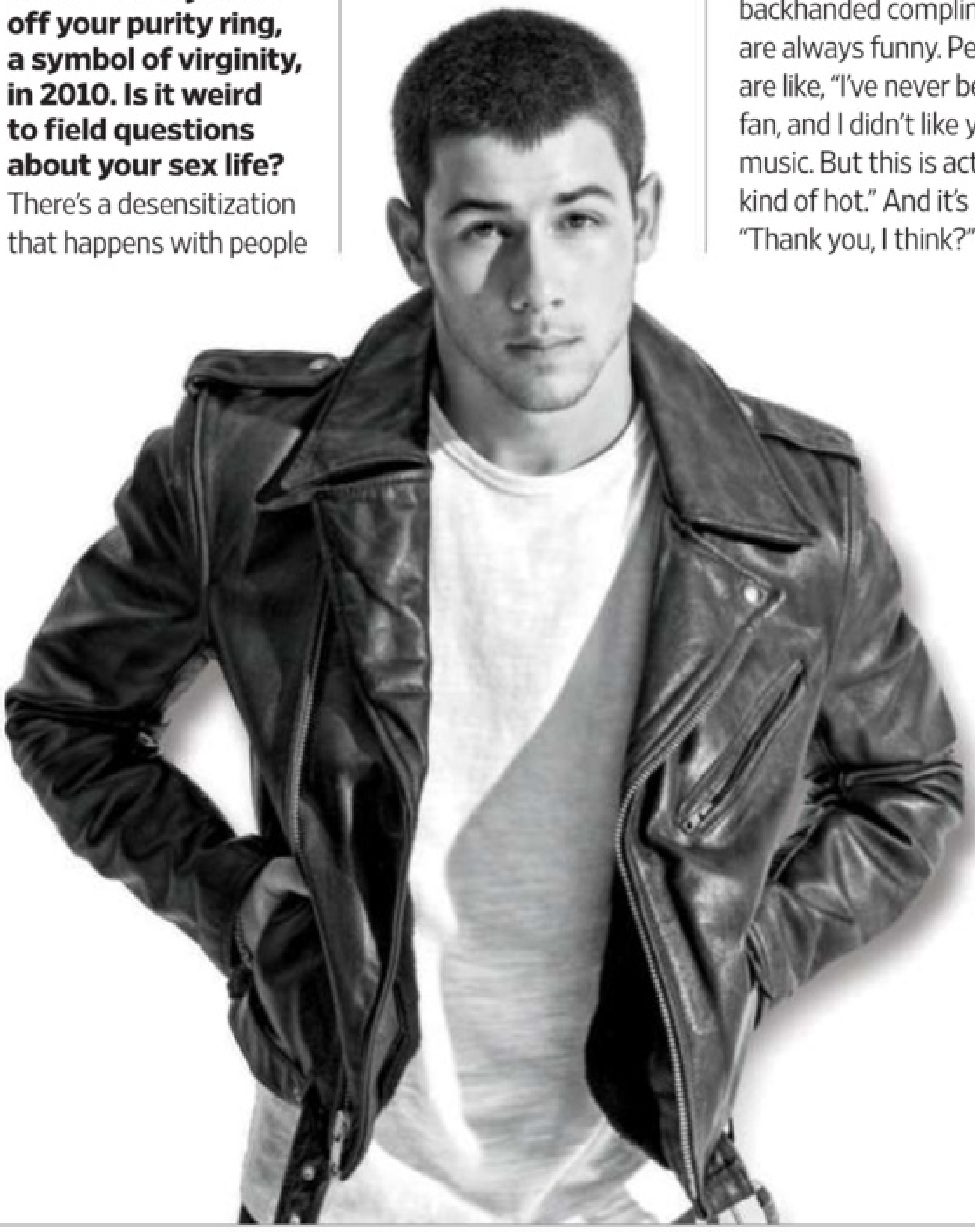
You famously took off your purity ring, a symbol of virginity, in 2010. Is it weird to field questions about your sex life?
There's a desensitization that happens with people because they're so familiar with you. I get that side of it, but it *is* strange to be asked about things that are so personal.

It was just revealed that your character on *Kingdom*, a mixed-martial-arts fighter, is gay. How has it been for you to take that on?
My first reaction was genuine excitement at the opportunity to push myself as an actor and play a character with stakes as high as Nate's and questions about himself and his sexuality. I think one of the sexiest things in a person is their acceptance of all people, so I'm thrilled to play him.

Have you ever Googled "Nick Jonas shirtless"?
[*Laughs*] I've Googled myself before. But no, never that specific search.

FYI, there are 3.4 million hits.
That's insane.

Do you feel like your fan base has changed?
Yeah, there are more guys at the shows as well—people who've been really surprised, musically, at where I've gone. The backhanded compliments are always funny. People are like, "I've never been a fan, and I didn't like your music. But this is actually kind of hot." And it's like, "Thank you, I think?"



ANDREW ZAEH

To start a revolution you need a KING.

KING DORK APPROXIMATELY
The sequel to KING DORK
FRANK PORTMAN

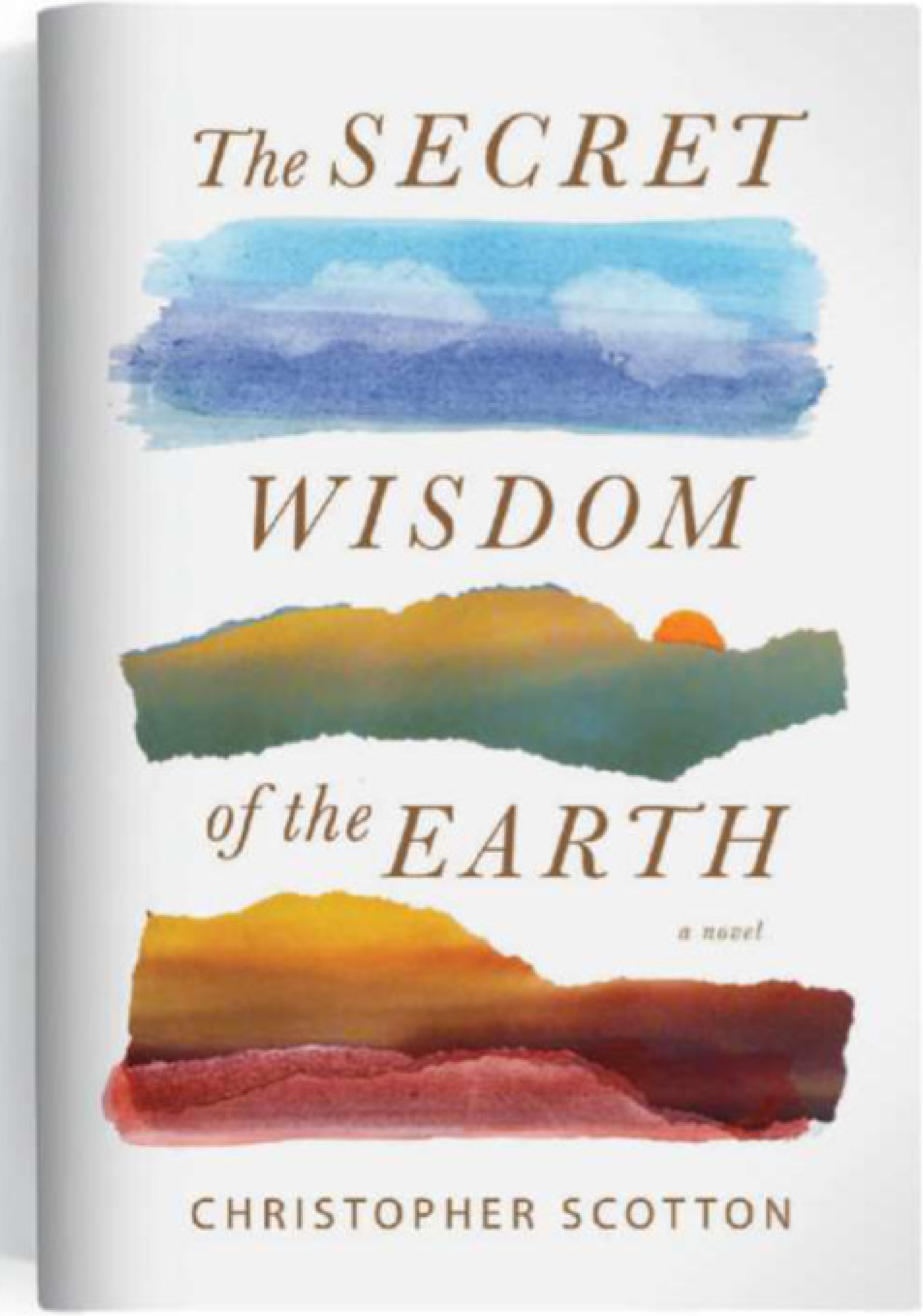
"[No account of high school] has made me laugh more. . . . Grade A."
—Entertainment Weekly

"King Dork will rock your world."
—John Green, author of The Fault in Our Stars

KING DORK
frank portman

KingDorkBooks.com

Books



The Secret Wisdom of The Earth

Christopher Scotton

DEBUT NOVEL

By Leah Greenblatt

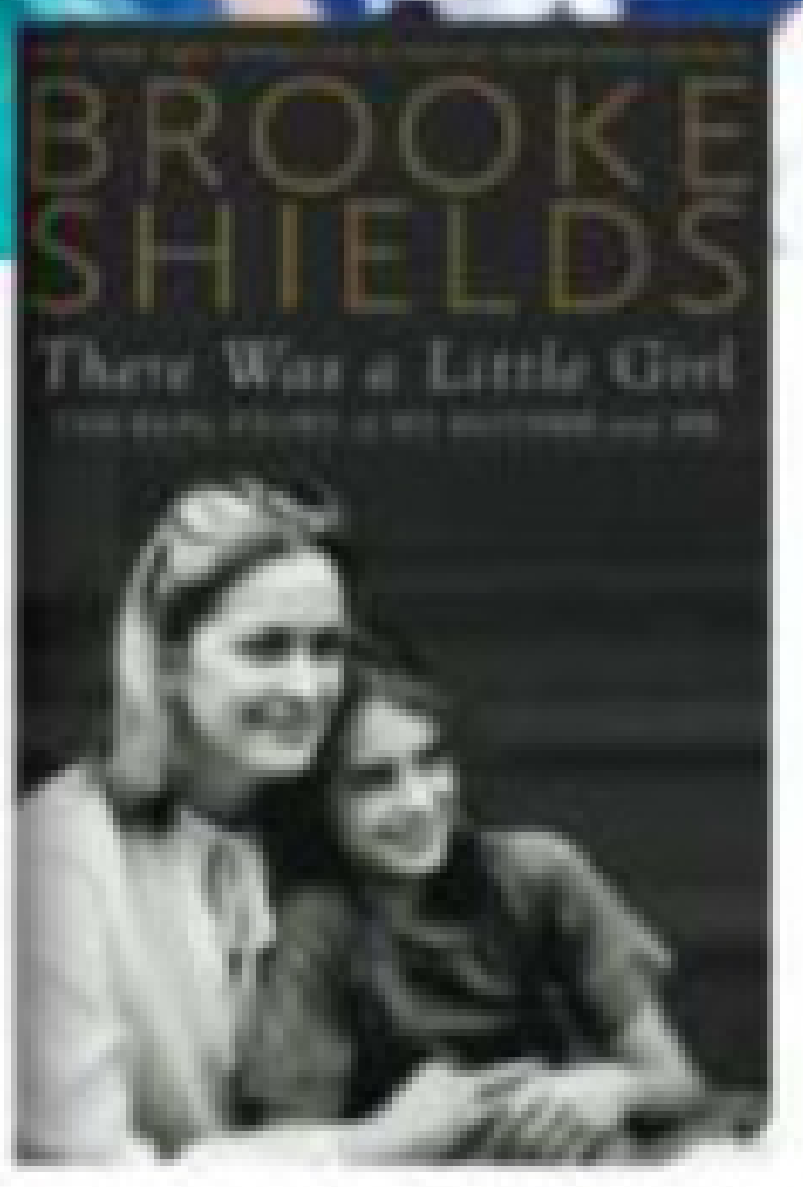
THE RESIDENTS OF Medgar, Kentucky, are proud of their little hamlet deep in Appalachian coal country: the dense woods and swimming holes, the down-home traditions and tight-knit family clans. But by 1985 the mountains are nearly mined out and the local economy is on the verge of collapse; it's become the kind of place "people just didn't move *into*." Fourteen-year-old Kevin Gillooly ends up there only because he and his mother, both numb and reeling from the sudden death of his baby brother, need somewhere soft to land, and his grandfather has offered to take them in for the summer.

Like most small towns in big novels (*The Secret Wisdom of the Earth* tops out at 466 pages), Medgar teems with a metropolis' worth of intrigue. There's the ongoing battle with local kingpin/baddie Bubba Boyd, who wants to blast the last veins of profit out of the earth at any cost, and the hairdresser-turned-activist whose sexuality severely tests its citizens' tolerance for open secrets. There are bullies and blood feuds and rednecks so maroon that the dueling *Deliverance* banjos seem to cue up whenever they roll by. There's also more than one scene of genuinely brutal violence, and the hanging specter of exactly how Kevin's brother died.

It took Christopher Scotton, who is the CEO of a software company by day, 15 years to write *Secret*, and it shows. It often feels as if he's trying to fit every known genre—coming-of-age tale, murder mystery, David vs. Goliath, adventure epic, literary song of the South—into his stuffed turducken of a plot. Too many characters speechify like they're auditioning for a community-theater mash-up of *Sling Blade* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and a narrative shift that comes in halfway through overstays its welcome. A present-day coda adds paragraphs but few epiphanies.

Still, it's not hard to see why the book has earned early praise and an impressive first-run print order of 100,000 copies. *Secret* has lovely sensory moments, and it strives to tell the type of story that many contemporary novelists find too old-fashioned, or too sincere: one about family and community, good guys and bad guys, love and loss and spiritual redemption. Like Medgar, it's flawed and sprawling and a little bit unmoored, but its aim is true. **B**

Brooke Shields with her mother, Teri



BROOKE SHIELDS

There Was a Little Girl

All About My Mother

In her new memoir, Brooke Shields explores the ups and downs of her relationship with her mom—and former manager—Teri, opening up about their tumultuous life together. —TINA JORDAN AND STEPHAN LEE

This is a book that stemmed from your mom's death. You wanted to set the record straight about her.

She was an alcoholic, she was flawed, there's a lot she did that was damaging. But that is not to say that's all she was.

You must have both good and bad memories of her.

It's—there was joy, you know? When you have an alcoholic parent, there are extreme lows, but there are also extreme highs. The guttural laughter, the spontaneity—kids just wanted to come over to *my* house and play. That part needed to be told as well as the stories of her getting drunk and passing out on Christmas.

She sounds complicated.

She was a *broad.*

I love that word.

She had street smarts. She came from a very poor family in Newark, and she worked her way up in society.

She had trouble relinquishing control of you, especially when it came to men. She wasn't very nice to Andre Agassi.

He was taking care of me, and that was the first time anybody had done that. It outraged her. She was like, "*I'm* the one that takes care of her." Look, I'm a mom. I know it's going to be really hard to hand over my babies to a man. I swear to God, any man that hurts them, I'll...de-ball him! [*Laughs*] My mom was able to turn everything around so that I was rendered fearful of maturing and leaving her. Falling in love meant leaving her. You know, she used to sleep with me strapped to her chest because she was so afraid I was going to die. I found out later she *had* lost a baby once. Finding that out on her deathbed was a shock.

She never confided in you, even when you had a miscarriage?

She couldn't do it. It must have been so crushingly painful that she wasn't even able to broach the subject. That, to me, is so sad.

When you separated from her legally and financially, you cleared all your files out of her office on a weekend.

She went home on a Friday and came back on a Monday, and I had gutted the place. And in hindsight I think, "Oooh, maybe that was a little rash." However, I wasn't strong enough to do it any other way. I had to just rip the Band-Aid off. And I don't think she thought I was capable of doing it.

There's a painful scene where you're in the hospital after the birth of your first daughter, and your mom, who's drunk, bobbles the baby in her arms.

I don't think she could handle being sober with this rite of passage, with this baby girl. "Oh my God, is she going to love that baby more than me?" When she started to fumble the baby, my husband just lost it, and I was thankful he was there, because I was in no position to protect my own baby, which was a whole other thing.

Well, no, you had just *had* the baby!

It was devastating. She wasn't going to be a sweet little grandmother.

Let's end on a fun question. If this book is made into a movie, who should play your mom?

I think Jennifer Lawrence.

She's a spitfire.

She's got the essence of my mom.

Teri as a young woman

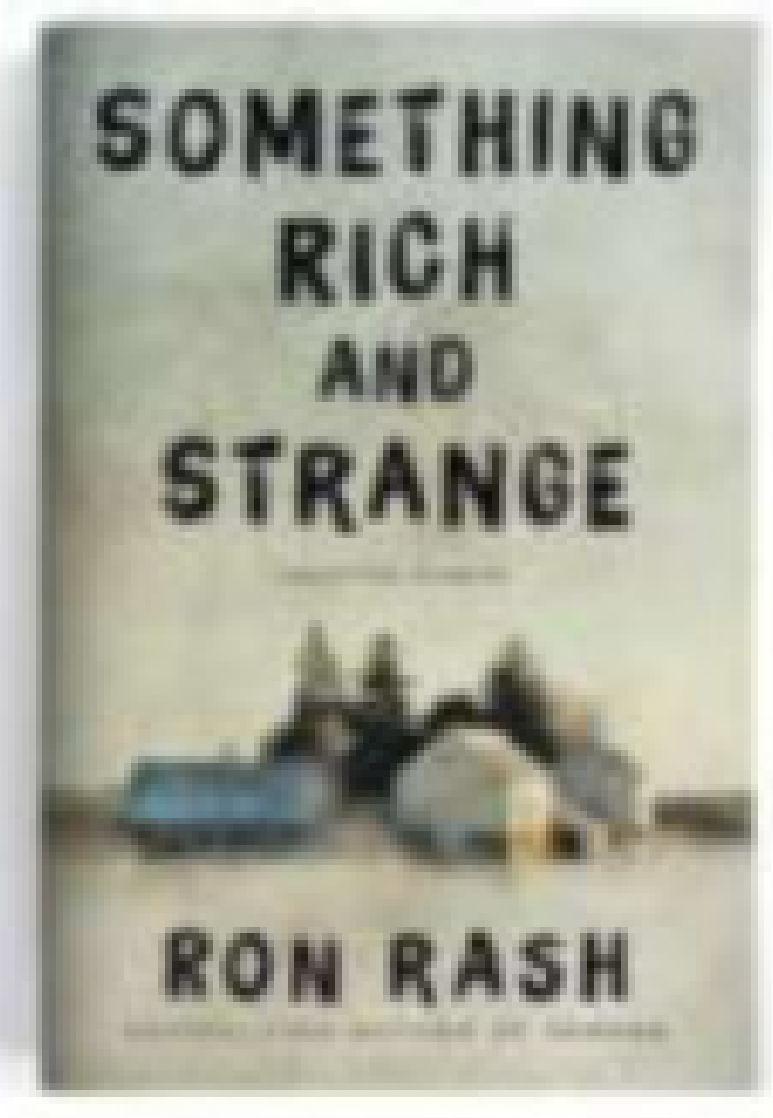
PHOTOS COURTESY OF BROOKE SHIELDS (2)

QUICK TAKES

Something Rich and Strange

Ron Rash

SHORT STORIES

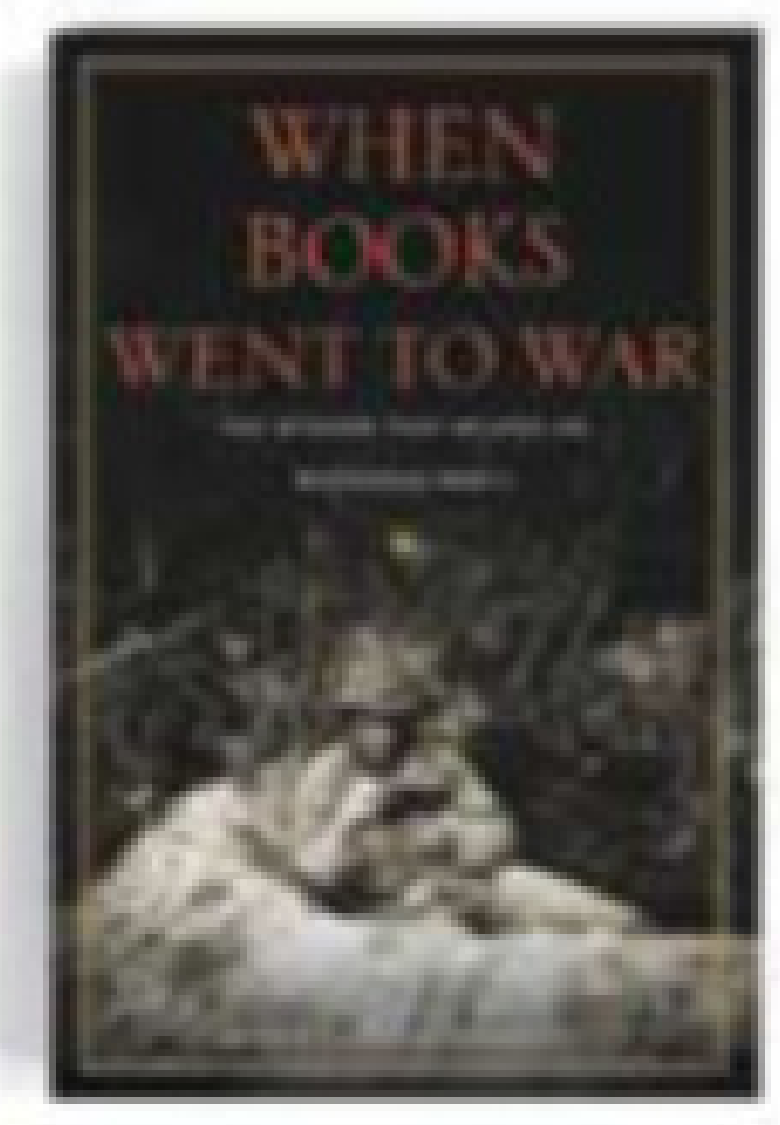


There's something in the specificity of Rash's writing, the way he can pinpoint time (from the Civil War through modern times) and place (mainly his beloved Appalachia) and drag them improbably into the universal. He isn't as well-known as he should be—although his 2008 novel, *Serena*, has recently been turned into a film starring Jennifer Lawrence and Bradley Cooper. This anthology of Rash's earthy, often eerie short stories is like a forest you can get lost in for hours, small but affecting tales of poverty, addiction, pride, love, and despair threaded with life-altering acts of violence and a firm sense of humanity. The title is from one of the stories, but there's no better description for what's inside. **A–** —*Keith Staskiewicz*

When Books Went to War

Molly Guptill Manning

NONFICTION



Did you know that during WWII, the U.S. War Department and most major New York publishers banded together to create a line of wallet-size paperbacks that could fit in a soldier's breast or pants pocket? The initiative, which started out small, eventually grew to 120 million copies of some 1,200 titles—novels, science books, humor collections, histories, biographies, and more. It was a huge hit with the troops, for whom books were often the only source of entertainment. One soldier told A.J. Liebling, then the war correspondent for *The New Yorker*, "These little books are a great thing. They take you away." The GIs, sailors, and airmen scrapped over the most popular titles when shipments arrived at the PX. They could not get enough of the potboiler *Forever Amber*, likely because of the sex scenes; Rosemary Taylor's *Chicken Every Sunday*, which made them nostalgic for their mothers' home cooking; and Katherine Anne Porter's haunting short stories, with their stark renderings of love and loss. The men peppered Betty Smith, the author of *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, with some 1,500 letters a year (she answered almost all of them). And they loved *The Great Gatsby* so much that critics, who had more or less ignored the novel since its 1925 publication, took another look.

When Books Went to War may be a slim read, but it packs a wallop. Whether or not you're a book lover, you'll be moved by the impeccably researched tale. Manning not only illuminates a dusty slice of WWII history that most of us know nothing about but also reminds us, in the digital era of movies and TV, just how powerfully literature once figured in people's lives. **A** —*Tina Jordan*

From the author of GOODNIGHT iPAD comes a cautionary "tail"

If You Give a Mouse an iPhone

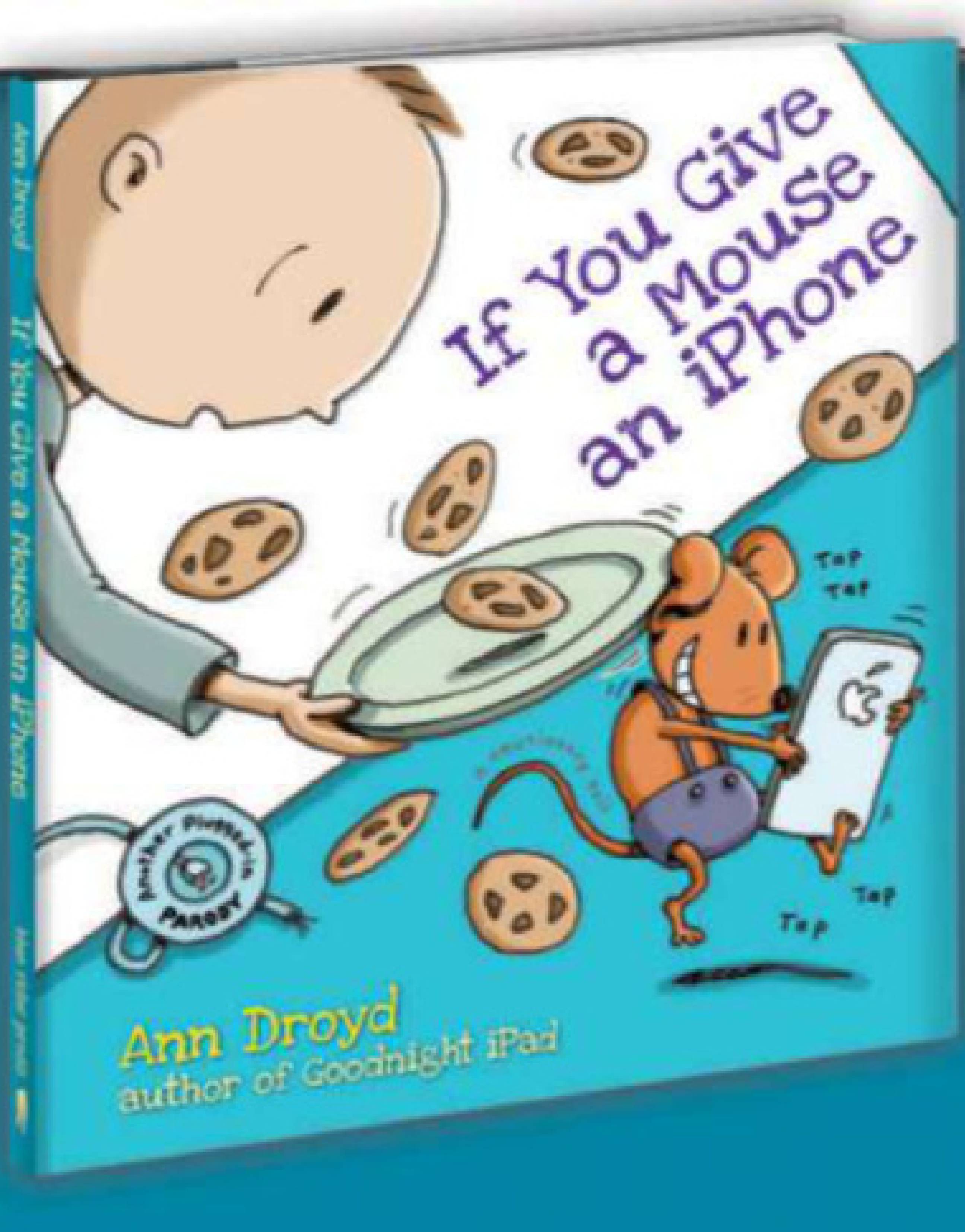
"A hilarious parody."
—*San Francisco Chronicle*

"Mimes the original with perfect pitch."
—*Publishers Weekly*

Visit Anndroyd.com to watch the special book animation featuring Fred Armisen!

PENGUINHOTLINE.COM
#GiveABook

blue rider press



Sorry! The English and Their Manners
Henry Hitchings
PICADOR
FOSSE
WASSON
ALL THE BIRDS, SINGING
EVIE WYLD
I AM PILGRIM
TERRY HAYES
Astonish Me
Maggie Shipstead
JOYCE CAROL OATES
Carthage
BUTTERFLIES IN NOVEMBER
AUÐUR AVA ÓLAFSDÓTTIR
THE TRIP TO ECHO SPRING
ON WRITERS AND DRINKING
OLIVIA LAING
PICADOR
ALL OUR NAMES
DINAW MENGESTU
VINTAGE
THOMAS PYNCHON
INHERENT VICE

New in Paperback

You'll find a bio of Broadway great Bob Fosse, a novel starring a prima ballerina, and an eccentric history of British manners, to name a few. —STEPHAN LEE

Inherent Vice

Thomas Pynchon

Before you watch the Paul Thomas Anderson film, read the genre-bending novel, which is Pynchon's first to be made into a movie.

All Our Names

Dinaw Mengestu

An African man with a mysterious past and a Midwestern social worker engage in a passionate affair in this novel by the author of *How to Read the Air*.

The Trip to Echo Spring

Olivia Laing

Laing examines the lives of six celebrated literary alcoholics, including Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Tennessee Williams.

Butterflies in November

Auður Ava Ólafsdóttir

Get acquainted with Icelandic fiction through this bizarre and comic road-trip novel.

Carthage

Joyce Carol Oates

The überprolific author returns with a literary thriller about a New York town rocked by a girl's disappearance in the Adirondacks.

Astonish Me

Maggie Shipstead

Lunge—don't walk—to read this underrated gem set in the world of professional ballet. (And then pick up Shipstead's previous novel, *Seating Arrangements*.)

I Am Pilgrim

Terry Hayes

Part murder mystery, part globe-hopping spy adventure, this page-turner by screenwriter Hayes will have you anticipating the inevitable movie. Incidentally, it's also Jimmy Fallon's favorite book of 2014.

All the Birds, Singing

Evie Wyld

This critical darling by the young British author centers on a woman named Jake, a sheep farmer with an unimaginably tragic history. As a shadowy beast begins mauling her sheep, we get a surreal, complex view of our heroine.

Fosse

Sam Wasson

Jazz hands at the ready! Wasson's giant biography of the iconic choreographer delves deep into the Oscar, Emmy, and Tony winner's A-list professional life and spirited personal relationships with the likes of Liza Minnelli and Dustin Hoffman.

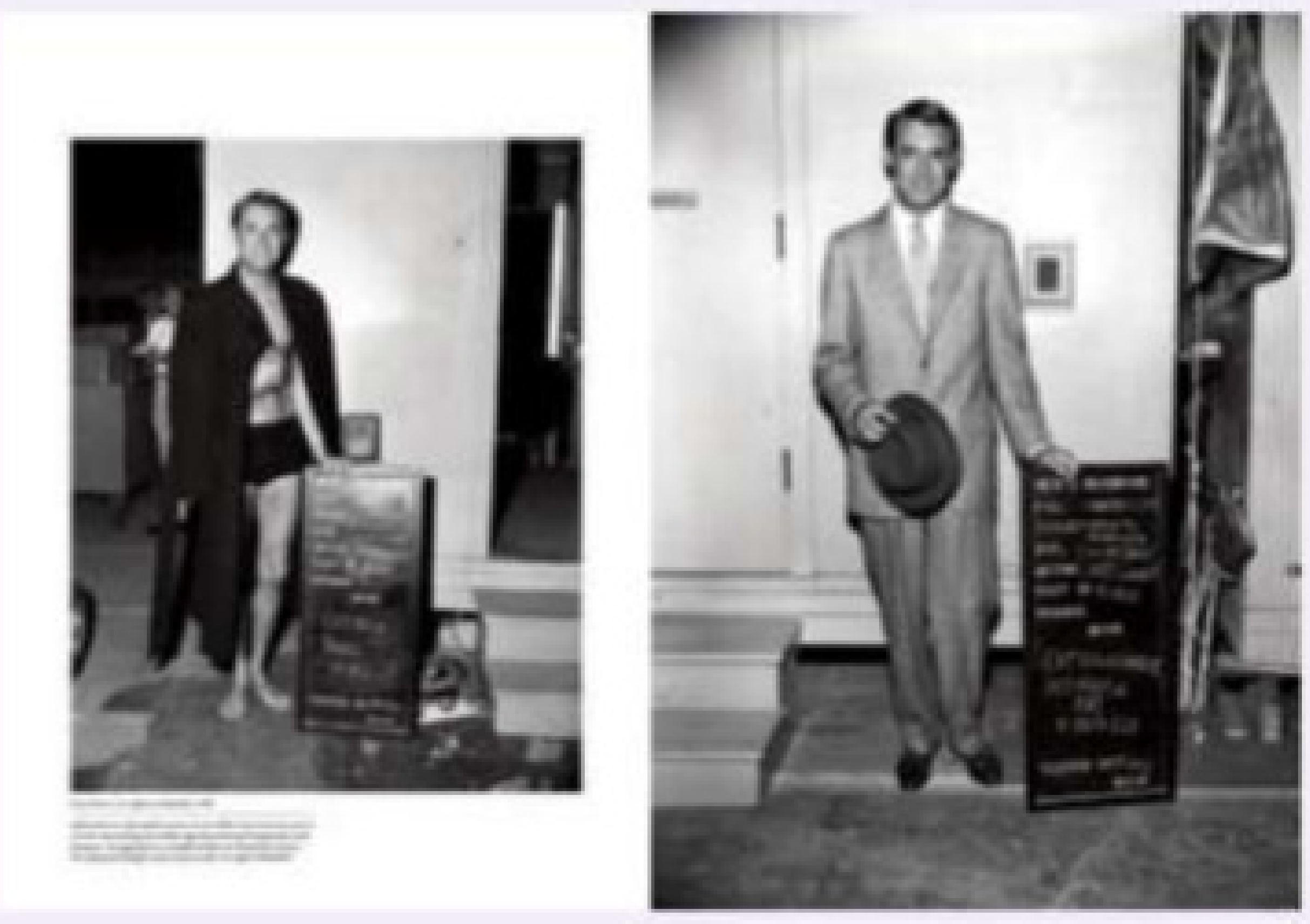
Sorry! The English and Their Manners

Henry Hitchings

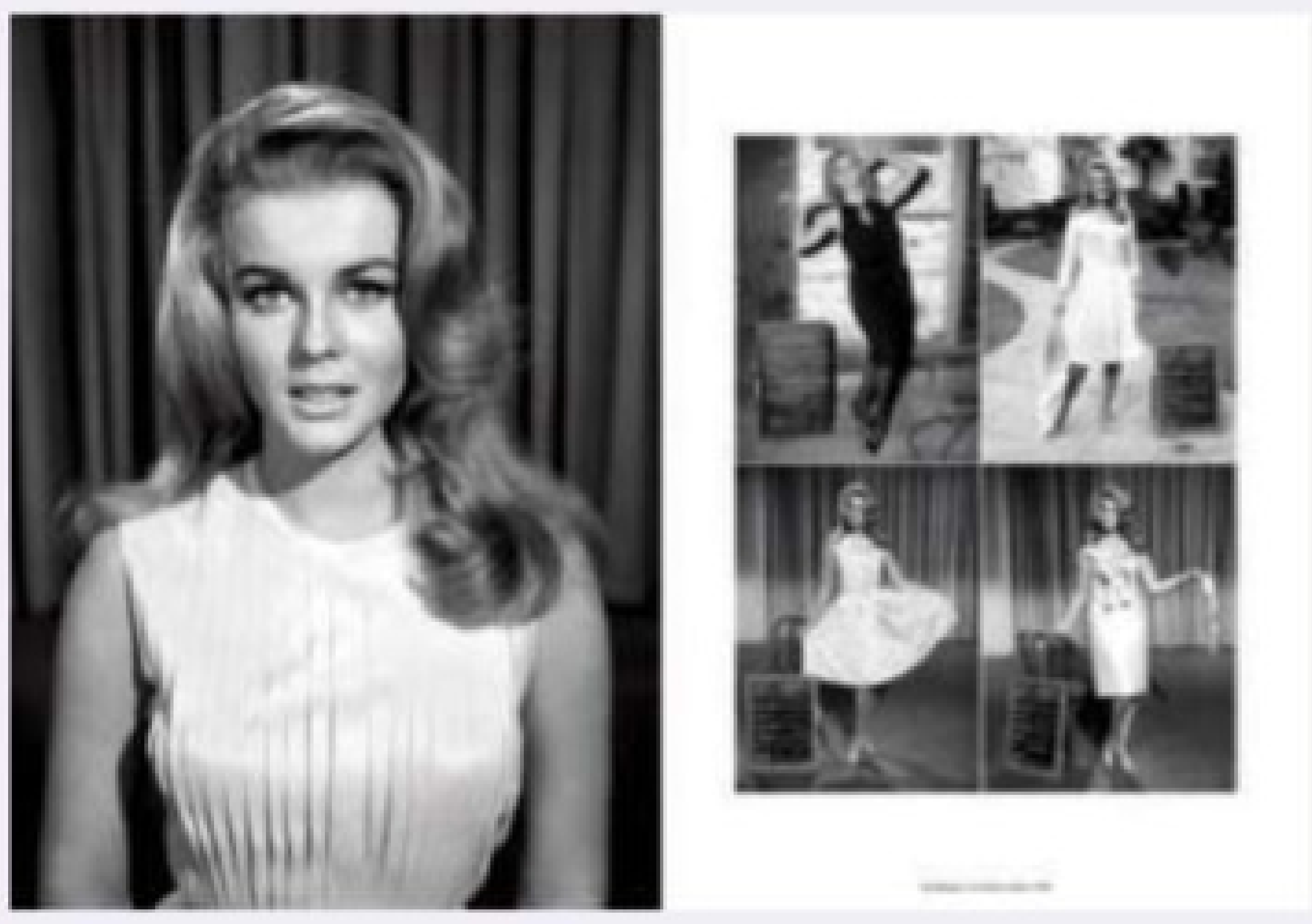
The Dowager Countess had her reasons! This sparkling exploration of British etiquette puts seemingly stuffy customs into context with fascinating dives into both history and literature, including the novels of Jane Austen.

Set Dressers

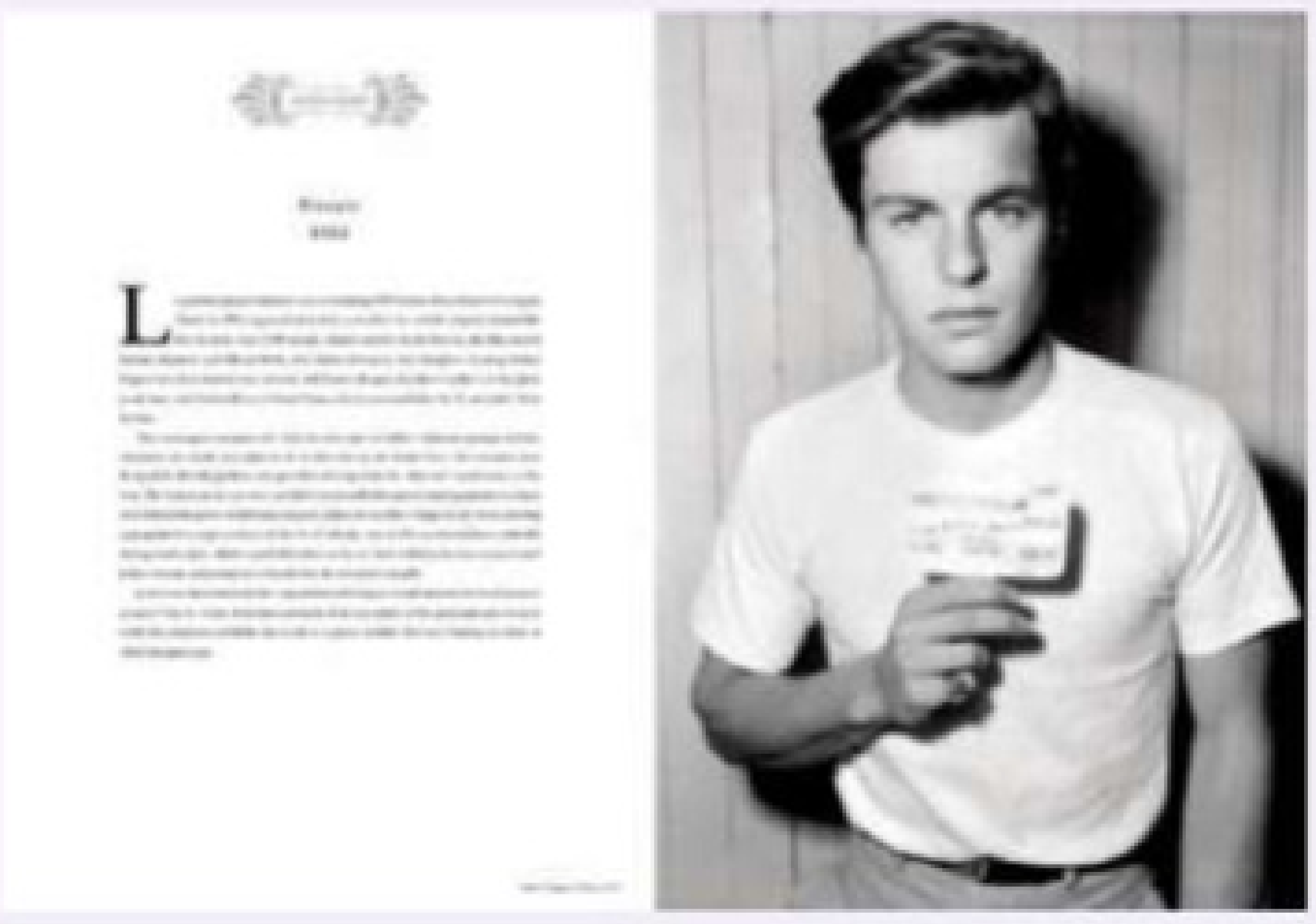
In *Styling the Stars*, Angela Cartwright and Tom McLaren mine the Twentieth Century Fox vault for "continuity shots," in which actors would pose, fully put together. One designer's work is a film buff's treasure. —TINA JORDAN



Cary Grant, *An Affair to Remember* (1957): The authors note that "Grant was one of very few stars during the Golden Age who remained independent and freelance."



Ann-Margret, *The Pleasure Seekers* (1964): According to the authors, these shots are "a perfect example of a wardrobe image taken strictly for continuity purposes."



Robert Wagner, *Titanic* (1953): Behind the scenes with an impossibly young-looking Wagner; the film "was shot indoors under the blazing studio lights, which caused difficulties on the set."

Paperbacks photograph by MICHAEL CHINI

WEEKS OF DEC. 22–JAN. 4

The Cheat Sheet

YOUR DAY-TO-DAY GUIDE TO EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW IN POP CULTURE. BY RAY RAHMAN

MONDAY 12/22

Tiny House Nation

TV | 9–10PM | FYI

SEASON PREMIERE The first diminutive dwelling to be featured this season will be a 264-square-foot honeymoon suite. Because who doesn't want to hear "It's so small!" on their wedding night?

Anger Management

TV | 10–11PM | FX

SERIES FINALE That's right, Charlie Sheen actually pulled off 100 episodes of this thing. Now let's forget it ever happened.

Euros of Hollywood

TV | MIDNIGHT–1AM | BRAVO

SEASON FINALE A surprise revelation "rocks the Euro community to the core." It turns out that this whole time they never knew David Hasselhoff is actually an American.

TUESDAY 12/23

One Direction: The TV Special

TV | 8–9PM | NBC

The boy-banders will perform, do funny stunts, and put on disguises to surprise their unsuspecting fans. If they really want to go unnoticed, they should dress up as O-Town.

The Trip to Italy

DVD | MOVIE

Warning: Make sure you've got plenty of food (preferably pasta) on hand when watching this movie, because you *will* get hungry.

Funkadelic

ALBUM | FIRST YA GOTTA SHAKE THE GATE

It's the first physical release of the George Clinton band's debut album since 1981. This is the big Clinton comeback everyone's been talking about lately, right?

FUNKADELIC
SHAKE THE GATE

Mozart in the Jungle

STREAMING | AMAZON

SERIES DEBUT Sexy Gael García Bernal stars as the rock-star conductor of the New York Symphony. Wear your finest pearls so you'll have something to clutch.

WEDNESDAY 12/24

The Wrong Mans

STREAMING | HULU

SEASON PREMIERE When the series debuted last year, we called James Corden and Mathew Baynton—the creators and stars of this charming British caper comedy—"the Simon Pegg and Nick Frost of Hulu." Their new four-episode run proves us right. Torn from England, Sam (Baynton) and Phil (Corden) deal with the fallout from the growing criminal conspiracy, this time near the U.S.-Mexico border. Yes, *The Wrong Mans* has gone international, but this is no *Sex and the City 2.* The duo's hilariously awkward chemistry gets even stronger abroad… and in prison. "*We* don't have to be racists," Phil tells Sam as they navigate the yard. "We just have to hang out with some!" That's as good an introduction as any to Corden, who will soon be all up in your living room every night hosting *The Late Late Show.* **A–**

Too Cute!

TV | 7–11PM | ANIMAL PLANET

This special holiday edition of the animal-clip show is called "#MerryCuteness." As you can tell from the image above, this is not a drill.

Barmageddon

TV | 10–11PM | TRUTV

Comedian Mo Mandel presides as two incompatible bar owners try to run each other's business. It might not work, but hey, it's worth a shot.

THURSDAY 12/25

Black Mirror

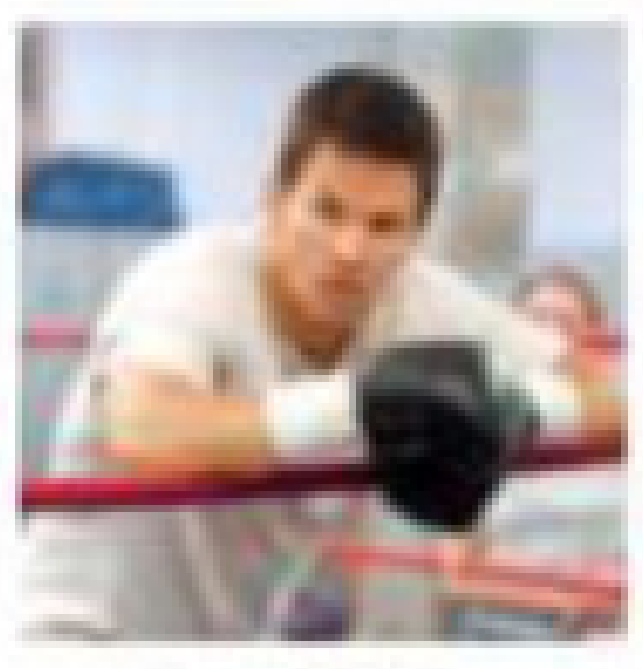
TV | 9:30–11PM | DIRECTV

Every stand-alone episode of the British sci-fi brain twister is like a perfectly plotted O. Henry story, which means the less you know before you watch, the better. That's also true of this feature-length seasonal special (titled "White Christmas"), which stars Jon Hamm (*Mad Men*), Rafe Spall (*Prometheus*), and Oona Chaplin (*Game of Thrones*), so let's just say it's about two strangers holed up together in a cabin on Christmas for some reason that's not exactly clear until the end. It's a gripping mystery, as well as a smart allegory that speaks to Hamm's particular appeal as Don Draper. And there isn't just an amazing twist at the end—there are at least three of them. Between this and the U.K. version of *The Office*, it's more than enough to prove that the British excel at depressing the hell out of us during the holidays. **A** —*Melissa Maerz*

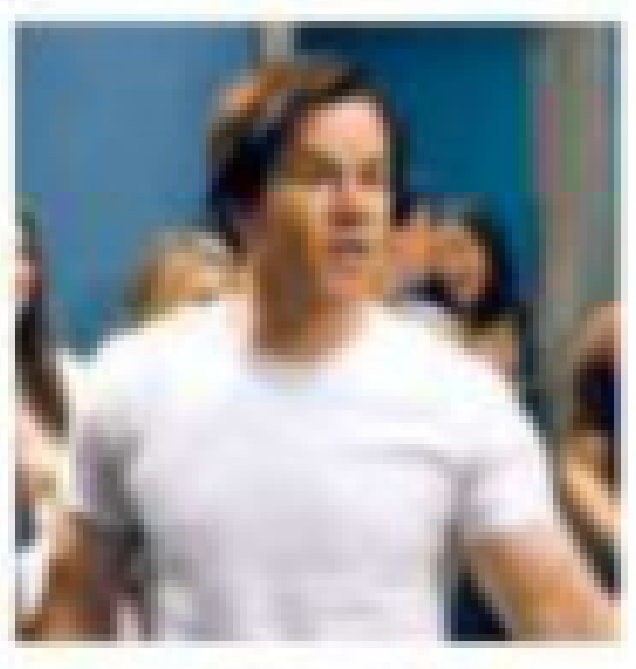
The Gambler

MOVIE | R | 1 HR., 51 MINS.

If *The Gambler* is like most Mark Wahlberg movies—or, really, Mark Wahlberg anythings—here are the odds that it will contain the following:



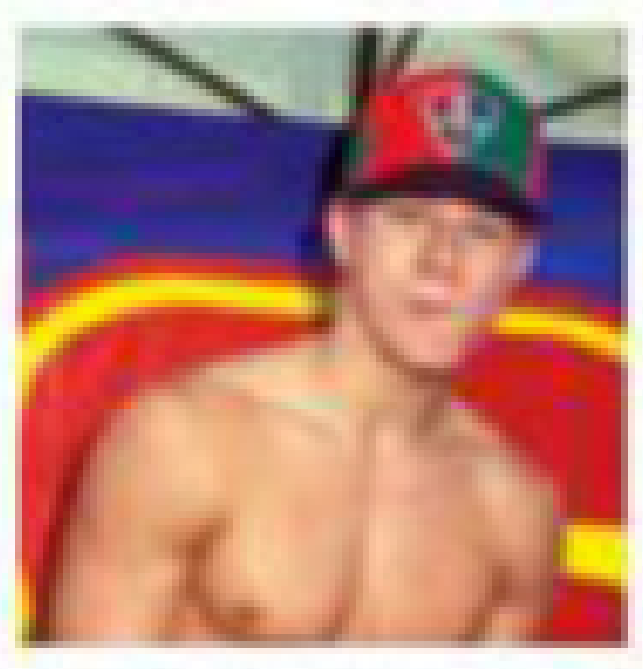
3:1
Boston accent



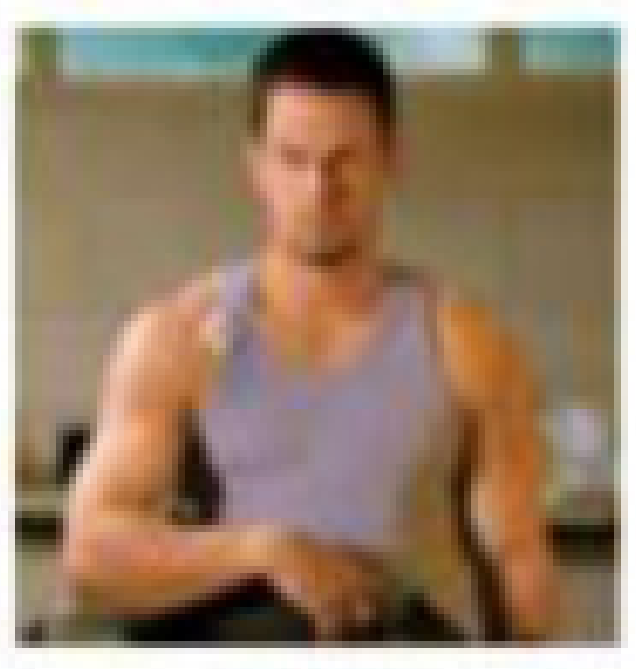
2:1
White T-shirt

346:2
"Say hi to your mother for me"

5:3
Menacing whispering



1642:1
Funky Bunch references



1:1
Biceps

TINY HOUSE NATION: FYI NETWORK; *ANGER MANAGEMENT*: BYRON COHEN/FX NETWORKS; *EUROS OF HOLLYWOOD*: TOMMY GARCIA/BRAVO; ONE DIRECTION: JEFF DALY/NBC; *THE TRIP TO ITALY*: CIRO MEGGIOLARO; *THE WRONG MANS*: COCO VAN OPPENS; *THE FIGHTER*: JOJO WHILDEN; *SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE*: DANA EDELSON; *THE GAMBLER*: CLAIRE FOLGER; MARKY MARK: BARRY KING/WIREIMAGE.COM; *SHOOTER*: KIMBERLEY FRENCH

*Times are Eastern Standard and subject to change

FUNNY

James Corden
on *The Wrong Mans*
(Hulu)

STUFFY

Hugh
Bonneville on
Downton Abbey (PBS)
→

How Do You Like Your Brits?

AMERICAN

Dominic
West on
The Wire
(HBO)
→

Unbroken

MOVIE | PG-13 | 2 HRS., 17 MINS.

Can't imagine the holiday movie season without a two-hour-long World War II drama? Angelina Jolie's got your back.

American Sniper

MOVIE | R | 2 HRS., 12 MINS.

Bradley Cooper is a marksman setting his sights on that most elusive target: an Oscar.

Into the Woods

MOVIE | PG | 2 HRS., 5 MINS.

Meryl Streep, Emily Blunt, Anna Kendrick, and Johnny Depp will surely not forget their lines in front of the whole school, including dreamy Blake, like you did that time in seventh grade.

The Interview

MOVIE | R | 1 HR., 52 MINS.

For every ticket this movie sells, another Sony employee will be dropped into a dunk tank.

Big Eyes

MOVIE | PG-13 | 1 HR., 45 MINS.

An artist produces renowned work, but her husband gets all the recognition and becomes famous. The couple would later go on to form the White Stripes.

Selma

MOVIE | PG-13 | 2 HRS., 8 MINS.

David Oyelowo plays MLK circa 1965 here, stars in the 1981-set *A Most Violent Year* (out Dec. 31), and showed up in *Interstellar*. That's a good 2014!

FRIDAY 12/26

The Wire

TV | NOON | *HBO SIGNATURE*

The series has been remastered in HD for the first time, and to celebrate, one full season will air each day—on top of being released digitally Jan. 5. Sounds like you'll need a mini binge-guide:

Season 1

WHAT TO EXPECT Prepare to learn the Baltimore streets inside and out. But be patient: You'll have *no idea* what anyone's talking about for a while.
KEY PLAYERS McNulty, Avon, Omar

Season 2

WHAT TO EXPECT Did ya love the streets? TOO BAD. David Simon doesn't care—he's taking you to the docks. This story line annoys nearly everyone. Still, you can't skip it.
KEY PLAYERS Stevedores (blerg)

Season 3

WHAT TO EXPECT Back to the streets! There's this really scary kid named Marlo running around now. But there's a bonus milieu: city hall. Yep, *sheeeeit* will get political here, in a way that affects everyone.
KEY PLAYERS Stringer, Tommy Carcetti, Clay Davis, Marlo

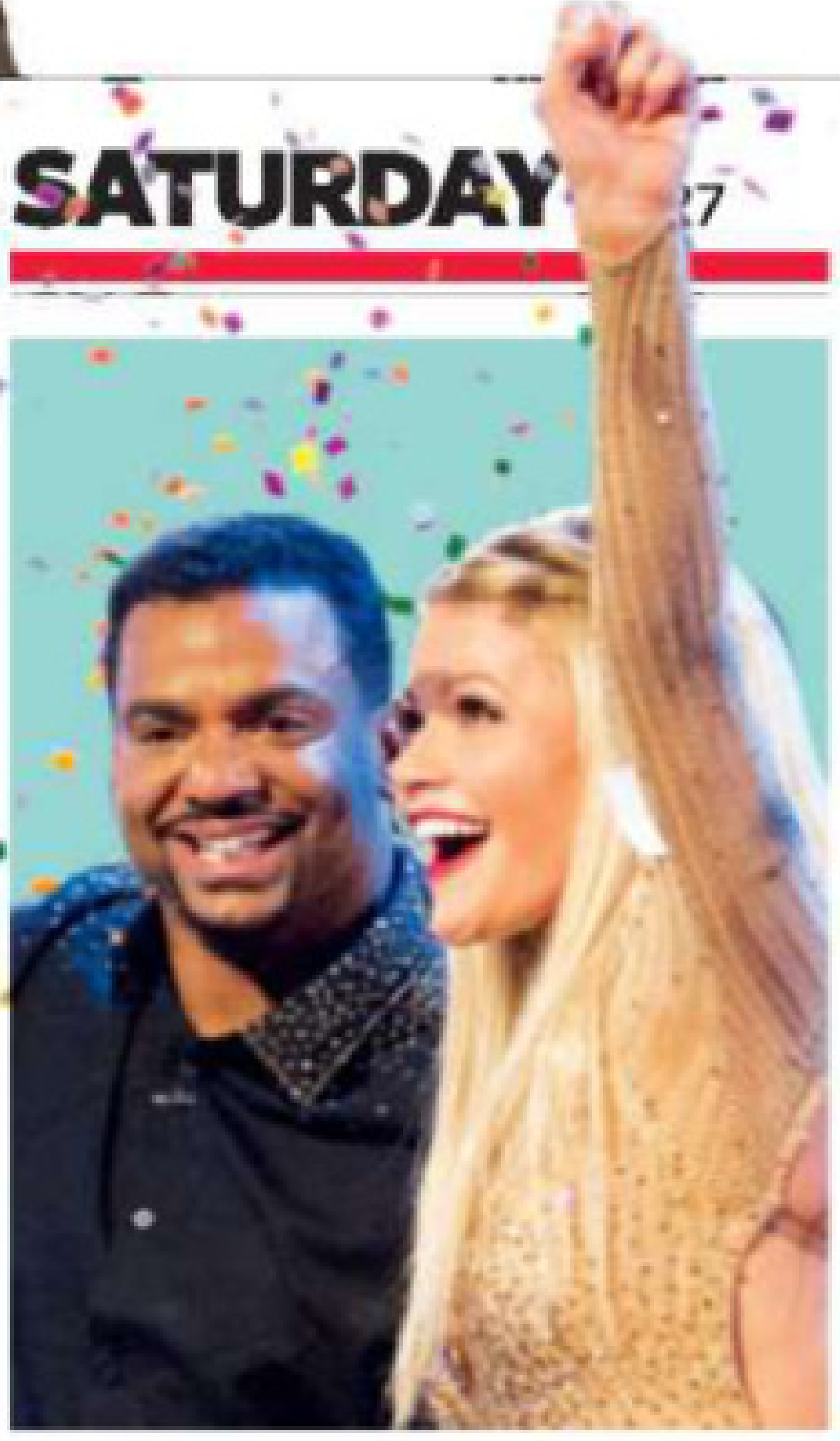
Season 4

WHAT TO EXPECT You know how in videogames, everyone always loves the snow/ice level? This is *The Wire*'s version of that: the school season. Universally beloved.
KEY PLAYERS Dukie, Michael, Bodie, Poot, Namond, Randy, Cutty, Bubbles

Season 5

WHAT TO EXPECT Ah, the newspaper season, where Simon shames us for ignoring this stuff when it's actual news yet eating it up when it looks like entertainment (*cough* *Serial* *cough*).
KEY PLAYERS The *system*, man!

SATURDAY 7



Dancing With the Stars: Live!

TOUR | 12/27–2/15

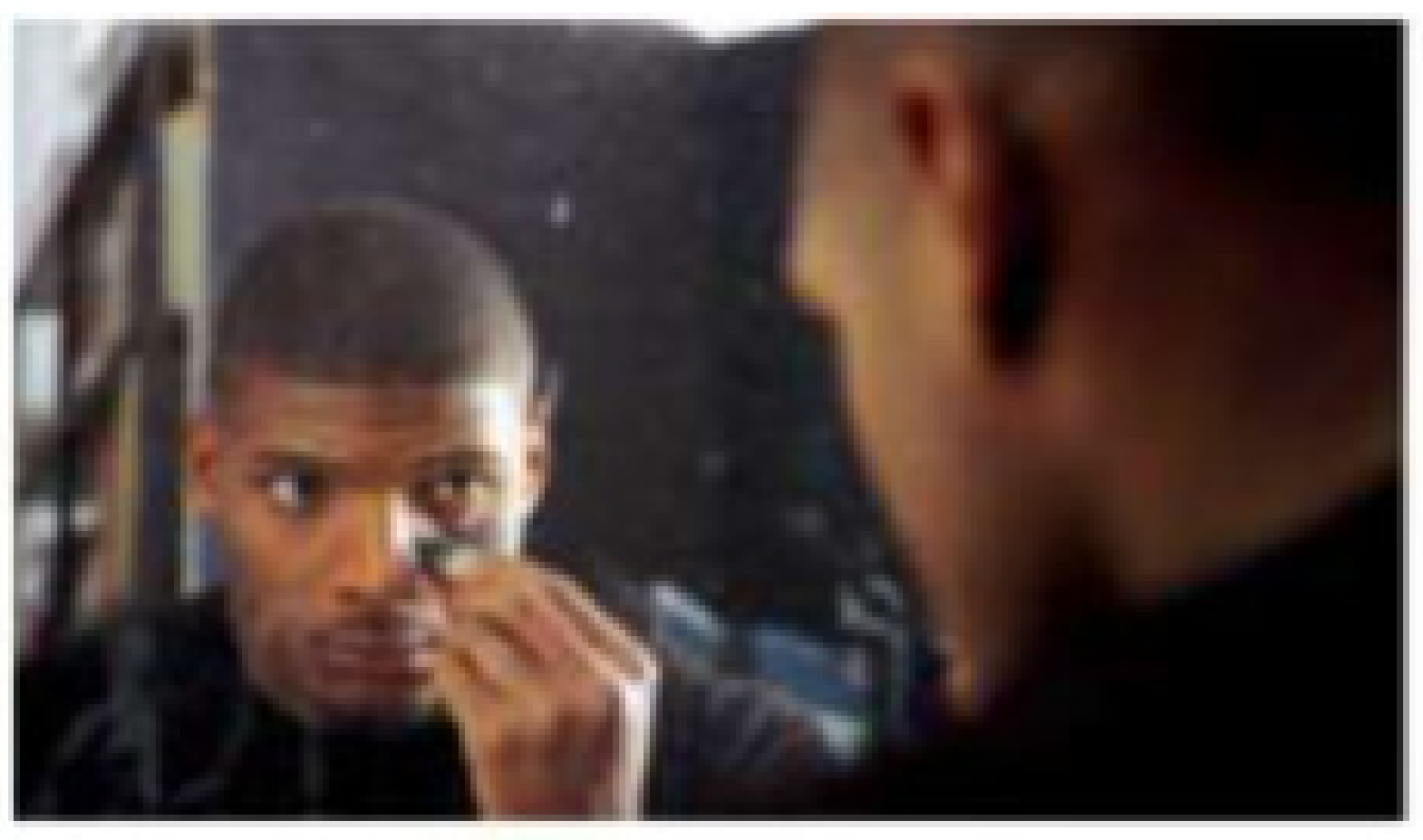
The *DWTS* cast, including this season's winners Alfonso Ribeiro and Witney Carson, perform new numbers and re-create old ones from the show. It's your chance to judge them in person instead of just on Twitter.

WWE: Tribute to

WWE Tribute to the Troops

TV | 8–9PM | *NBC*

Professional wrestlers honor the men and women who dedicate their lives to keeping America safe from the world's worst jabronis.



Oprah Prime: Michael Sam

TV | 10:30–11PM | *OWN*

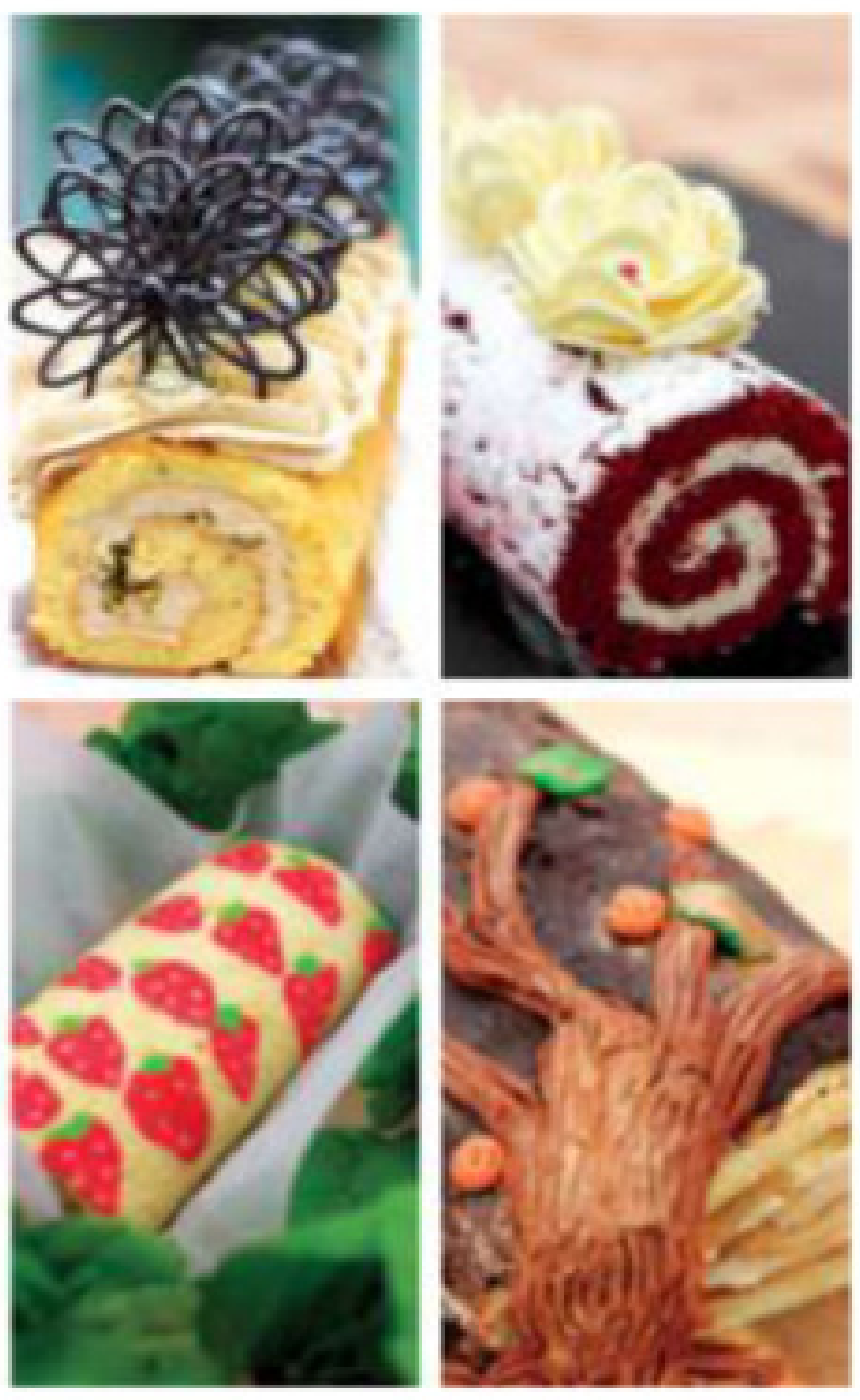
Winfrey will sit down for an exclusive interview with the former NFL prospect immediately following a new doc on the player airing at 9 p.m. Surely she'll tackle the big questions.

SUNDAY 12/28

The Great British Baking Show

TV | 8–9PM* | *PBS*

SERIES DEBUT Americans have been programmed to expect cruelty in competitive cooking shows—sabotage, chaos, and judges with souffléed egos macerating contestants' self-worth. This very British series is refreshing in that it's actually about the food; watching a dozen hopefuls bake up trifles while maintaining their dignity turns out to be a delight. And yes, the judges deliberate over a spot of tea.
A– —*Carolyn Todd* *check local listings



NBC Sunday Night Football

TV | 8:30–11:30PM | *NBC*

SEASON FINALE It's the last game of the regular season. Your TV is this much closer to becoming football-free!

Nanny Cam

TV | 9–11:02PM | *LIFETIME*

This is either a crazy Lifetime movie or a late contender for the best reality show of 2014.

CORDEN: COCO VAN OPPENS; BONNEVILLE: NICK BRIGGS/CARNIVAL FILM & TELEVISION LIMITED 2013 FOR *MASTERPIECE*; WEST (TOP), AIDAN GILLEN, MICHAEL K. WILLIAMS: NICOLE RIVELLI/HBO (3); *BIG EYES*: LEAH GALLO; MICHAEL B. JORDAN: DAVID LEE/HBO; WEST (BOTTOM) PAUL SCHIRALDI/HBO; *DANCING WITH THE STARS*: KELSEY MCNEAL/ABC; CONFETTI: BANKSPHOTOS/GETTY IMAGES; *WWE TRIBUTE TO THE TROOPS*: WWE, INC.; FOOTBALL: GETTY IMAGES; *NANNY CAM*: LIFETIME

WEEKS OF DEC. 22–JAN. 4

The Cheat Sheet

YOUR DAY-TO-DAY GUIDE TO EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW IN POP CULTURE. BY RAY RAHMAN

MONDAY 12/29

It Takes a Choir

TV | NOON–8PM | *USA*

SERIES DEBUT USA airs all eight episodes of the long-delayed reality show about a British choirmaster. If you choose this over *The Wire*, we can't help you anymore.

Mike & Molly

TV | 8:30–9PM | *CBS*

Mike is dismayed when Carl invites Molly's sister to a guys-only fishing trip. Ugh, don't you hate it when women spoil manly activities such as "sitting around doing nothing"?

Major Crimes

TV | 9–10PM | *TNT*

Flynn must help guide a man holding on to the ledge of a bridge. "Listen to me carefully, sir," he shouts. "It's actually quicker to take the tunnel during rush hour!"

Branson Famous

TV | 10–10:30PM | *TRUTV*

SERIES DEBUT The reality show goes inside the colorful Branson, Mo., entertainment industry. There'd better be at least *one* episode where someone falls off the side of a riverboat.

TUESDAY 12/30

The 37th Annual Kennedy Center Honors

TV | 9–11PM | *CBS*

Stephen Colbert (the real one) hosts the prestigious affair, which this year honors the likes of actor Tom Hanks, singer Al Green, dancer Patricia McBride, musician Sting, and comedian Lily Tomlin. Better luck next year, performance artist Shia LaBeouf.

The Equalizer

DVD | *MOVIE*

Let Denzel Washington remind you that he's the original Liam Neeson.

Taco Trip

TV | 9:30–10PM | *COOKING*

Tonight's episode explores the taco scene in Portland, Ore., where local customs call for salsa, guacamole, and to put a bird on it.

Shameless: The Complete Fourth Season

DVD | *SERIES*

This DVD is the most expensive thing the Gallagher family has ever been in.

WEDNESDAY 12/31

New Year's Roundup

TV | *VARIOUS*

As always, you've got a few options this evening:

- Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve With Ryan Seacrest (ABC, 8 p.m.)
- Pitbull's New Year's Eve Revolution (Fox, 8 p.m.)
- New Year's Eve With Carson Daly (NBC, 10 p.m.)
- New Year's Eve With Victoria Justice and Charlamagne (MTV, 11 p.m.)

Which one's best for you? Take our quiz to find out! (Answers below.)

1. Are you from Miami?
(A) No.
(B) I'd never leave Ohio! It's just so nice here.
(C) I think my grandparents live close to there?
(D) Hell yes, papiiiiiiiiiiiii!

2. Do you want to watch the Times Square ball drop?
(A) Sure.
(B) Of course I do!
(C) Ha-ha, you said "ball drop."
(D) Whatever, papiiiiiiiiiiiii!

3. Which musician do you want to see perform?
(A) Anyone from *The Voice* will do.
(B) You know, those Pentatonix kids sure are nice.
(C) MTV plays music?
(D) Pitbull, papiiiiiiiiiiiii!

4. Be honest: Are you Pitbull?
(A) No.
(B) Did you just ask if I was a dog?
(C) Um, that guy's, like, 60 years old!
(D) Hell yes, papiiiiiiiiiiiii!

ANSWERS: If you answered mostly option A, go with Carson Daly; if B, Ryan Seacrest; if C, MTV; if D, Pitbull.

THURSDAY 1/1

The 126th Rose Parade

TV | 11:30AM–1PM | *NBC*

Hoda Kotb teams with Al Roker to host the annual Pasadena event, which you'll probably watch on the restaurant TV during your epically long wait for a table at brunch.

The Taste

TV | 8–10PM | *ABC*

The contestants must work with ingredients like champagne, shellfish, and caviar. I guess they ran out of edible gold?

Little Women: LA

TV | 9–10PM | *LIFETIME*

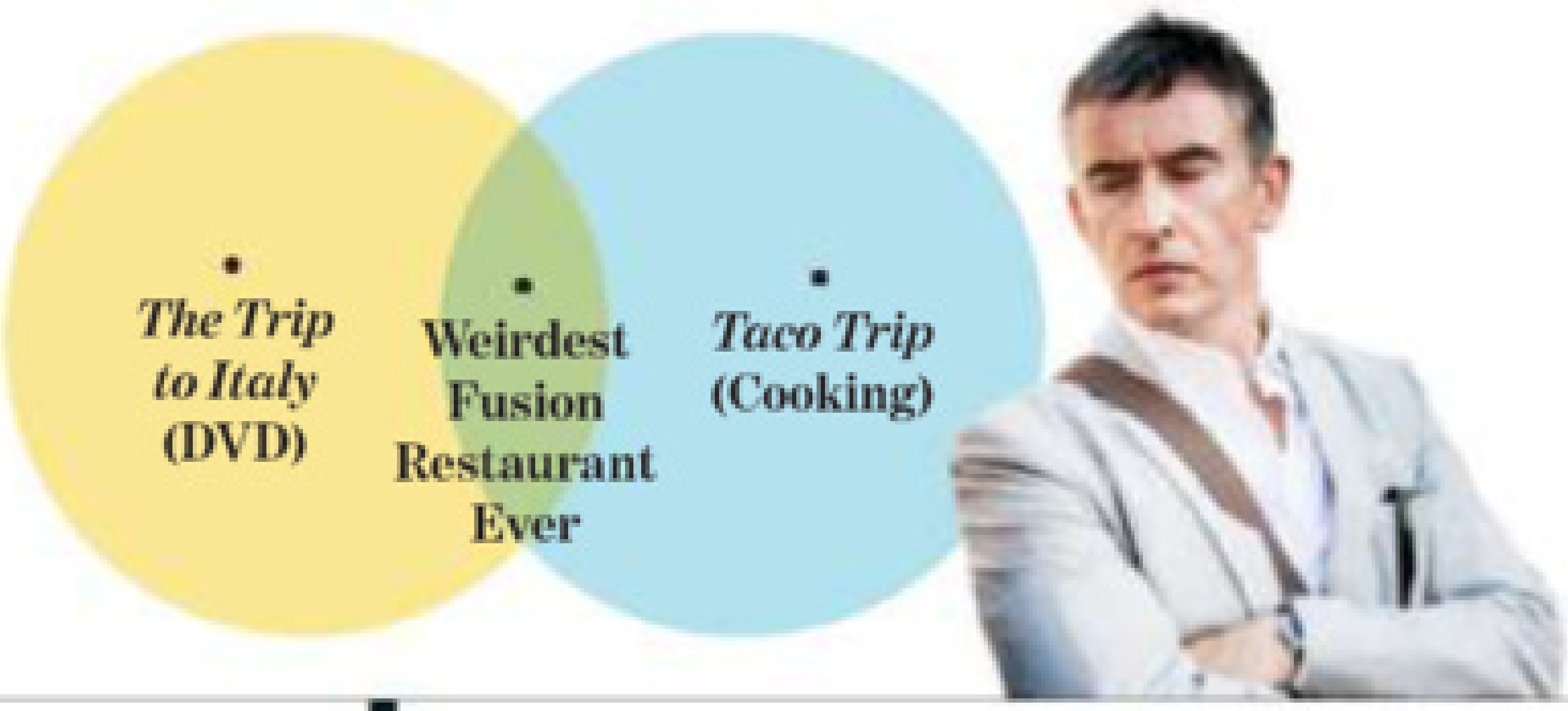
SEASON PREMIERE Elena Gant & Co. will be joined by "a new little lady" in season 2. Uh-oh, who let Honey Boo Boo loose again?!

The Millionaire Matchmaker

TV | 9–10PM | *BRAVO*

Patti helps Prince Ferdinand von Anhalt of Germany find love. Weird, all the girls I knew growing up were always writing their first name followed by "von Anhalt of Germany" in their notebooks.

MIKE & MOLLY: ROBERT VOETS/WARNER BROS.; *BRANSON FAMOUS*: MARK HILL/TRUTV; *THE 37TH ANNUAL KENNEDY CENTER HONORS*: JOHN PAUL FILO/CBS; *THE EQUALIZER*: SCOTT GARFIELD; TACO, ROSE PETALS: GETTY IMAGES (2); CARSON DALY: JASON LAVERIS/FILMMAGIC.COM; VICTORIA JUSTICE: MICHAEL STEWART/WIREIMAGE.COM; CHARLAMAGNE: JAMEL TOPPIN; PITBULL: GREG WATERMANN; RYAN SEACREST: BOB D'AMICO/ABC; *LITTLE WOMEN: LA*: RICHARD KNAPP; *MILLIONAIRE MATCHMAKER*: RANDEE ST. NICHOLAS/TY KU



Trippy Venn Diagram

← *Steve Coogan in* The Trip to Italy

FRIDAY 1/2

Wake Up Call

TV | 9–10PM | *TNT*

The show follows Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson as he lends a helping hand to regular people facing everyday problems, from dysfunctional families to unwanted copies of *Tooth Fairy* on DVD.

Hawaii Five-0

TV | 9–10PM | *CBS*

William Forsythe guests as an old-school private detective who helps solve a case. He'll be the guy who keeps busting out a magnifying glass when someone shouts, "Zoom and enhance!"

The Woman in Black 2 Angel of Death

MOVIE | PG-13 | 1 HR., 38 MINS.

In case you've already seen all the good Oscar-y movies.

SATURDAY 1/3

Brunch @ Bobby's

TV | NOON–12:30PM | *COOKING*

SEASON PREMIERE Chef Flay kicks off the season with an episode called "Waffles Gone Wild." The other title option was "XXX Hardcore Breakfast Porn."

Surprised by Love

TV | 9–11PM | *HALLMARK*

Hilarie Burton (*One Tree Hill*) stars as Josie Mayfield, a businesswoman frustrated that her parents don't approve of her boyfriend. Aw, Chad Michael Murray just can't catch a break.

Transporter The Series

TV | 10–11PM | *TNT*

Frank is hired to retrieve a chemical weapon from a Chinatown restaurant. So *that's* what No. 58 on the menu is!

SUNDAY 1/4

Galavant

TV | 8–9PM | *ABC*

SERIES DEBUT This epic four-week musical comedy proves we're ready for our own Monty Python-esque moment: *Galavant* has sass, shtick, and, yes, song (courtesy of Broadway duo Alan Menken and Glenn Slater). Noble knight Galavant (Joshua Sasse) falls in love with the beautiful Madalana (Mallory Jansen), who's kidnapped by the sinister King Richard (Timothy Omundson). Sound like *Robin Hood: Men in Tights*? No! There's a twist! Our poor hero is rejected and begins a quest for redemption. And with turns by John Stamos, Ricky Gervais, and "Weird Al" Yankovic, fans looking for wit and whimsy can expect a happy ending. **B+** —*Danielle Nussbaum*

The Simpsons

TV | 8–8:30PM | *FOX*

The Simpsons travel to outer space, but things go awry when they accidentally wake up Matt Damon.

Downton Abbey

TV | 9–10:15PM* | *PBS*

SEASON PREMIERE This is the episode where the Dowager Countess goes to Brooklyn to meet Jay Z and Beyoncé, right? *check local listings

Life Itself

TV | 9–11PM | *CNN*

The Roger Ebert documentary—one of our top films of 2014—makes its television debut.

The Celebrity Apprentice

TV | 9–11PM | *NBC*

SEASON PREMIERE We now interrupt your regularly scheduled Cheat Sheet to bring you the following announcement: There has been a Geraldo Rivera sighting. Repeat: There has been a Geraldo Rivera sighting. Please stay indoors and protect all women and children. The suspect is considered armed with a cheesy mustache and extremely dangerous (to good taste). Known accomplices include Gilbert Gottfried, Ian Ziering, and the dude from *Renegade*. Last known whereabouts: straight-up chillin' in the *Celebrity Apprentice* boardroom with Donald "Mr. Trump" Trump. Proceed with extreme caution. —*Dalton Ross*

Revenge

TV | 10:01–11PM | *ABC*

MIDSEASON PREMIERE Time for Daniel's funeral. Happy 2015!

THE TRIP TO ITALY: CIRO MEGGIOLARO; *WAKE UP CALL:* FRANK MASI/TNT; *HAWAII FIVE-0:* CBS; *THE WOMAN IN BLACK 2 ANGEL OF DEATH:* NICK WALL; *WAFFLES:* RICHARD CLARK/GETTY IMAGES; *SURPRISED BY LOVE:* EIKE SCHROTER; *TRANSPORTER THE SERIES:* CHRISTOS KALOHORIDIS; *GALAVANT:* NICK RAY/ABC; *DOWNTON ABBEY:* NICK BRIGGS/MASTERPIECE; *THE CELEBRITY APPRENTICE:* DOUGLAS GORENSTEIN/NBC; *REVENGE:* JORDIN ALTHAUS/ABC

The Bullseye

Here's a look at the pop culture news that was right on target this week—and the events that missed the mark

Styles me timbers!

SONY

Awwwwkward.

YouTube's No. 1 trending video of 2014 is "Mutant Giant Spider Dog," and just like that, Michael Bay has his next project.

Iggy Azalea laughs off rumors she was born a man, but stays suspiciously silent when asked if she was born human.

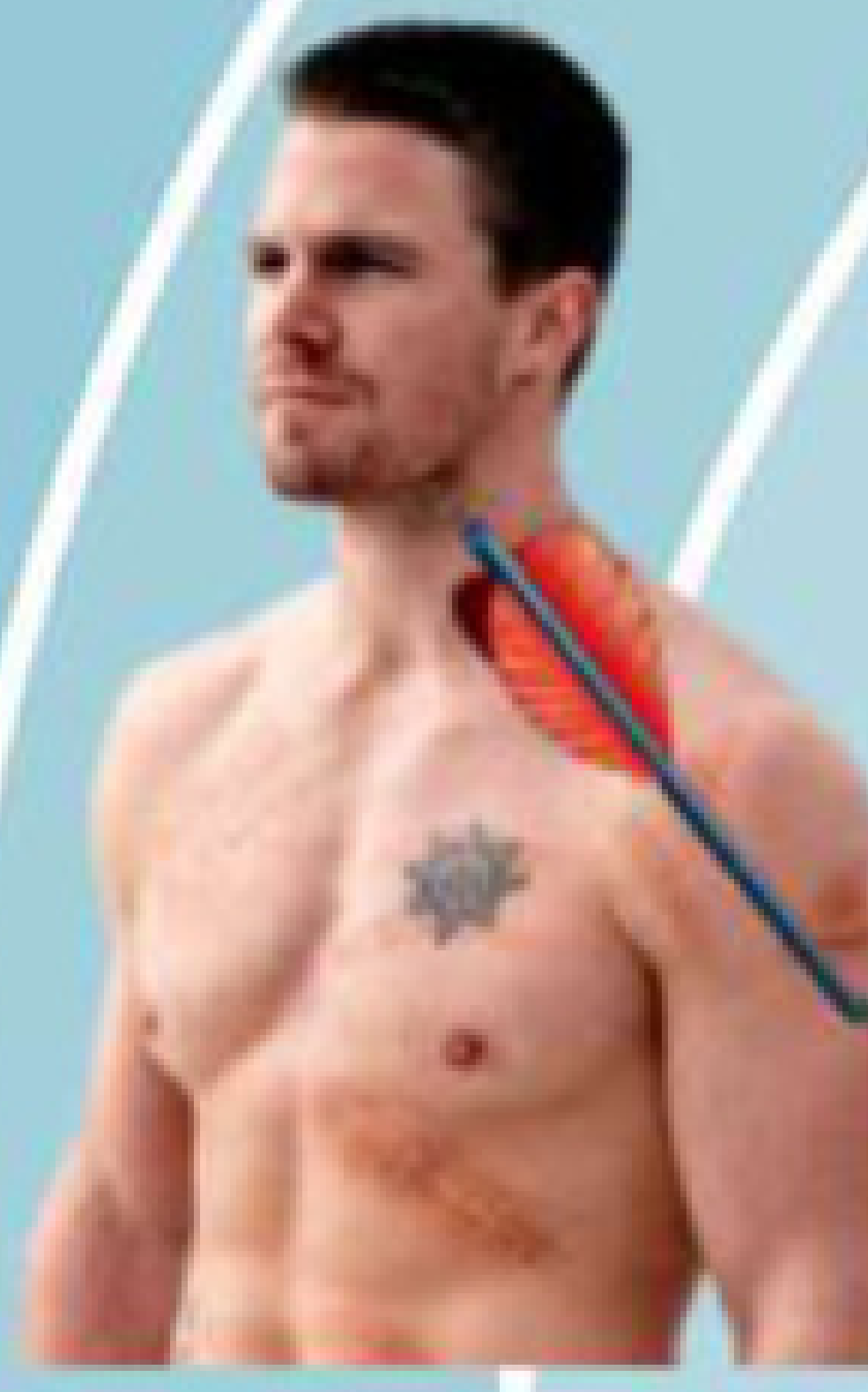
TV's best comedy comes to an end.

Big Eyes, full hearts, can't skip.

The best part about *Annie*

The second-best part about *Annie*

Put *Selma* at the top of your December to-do list.



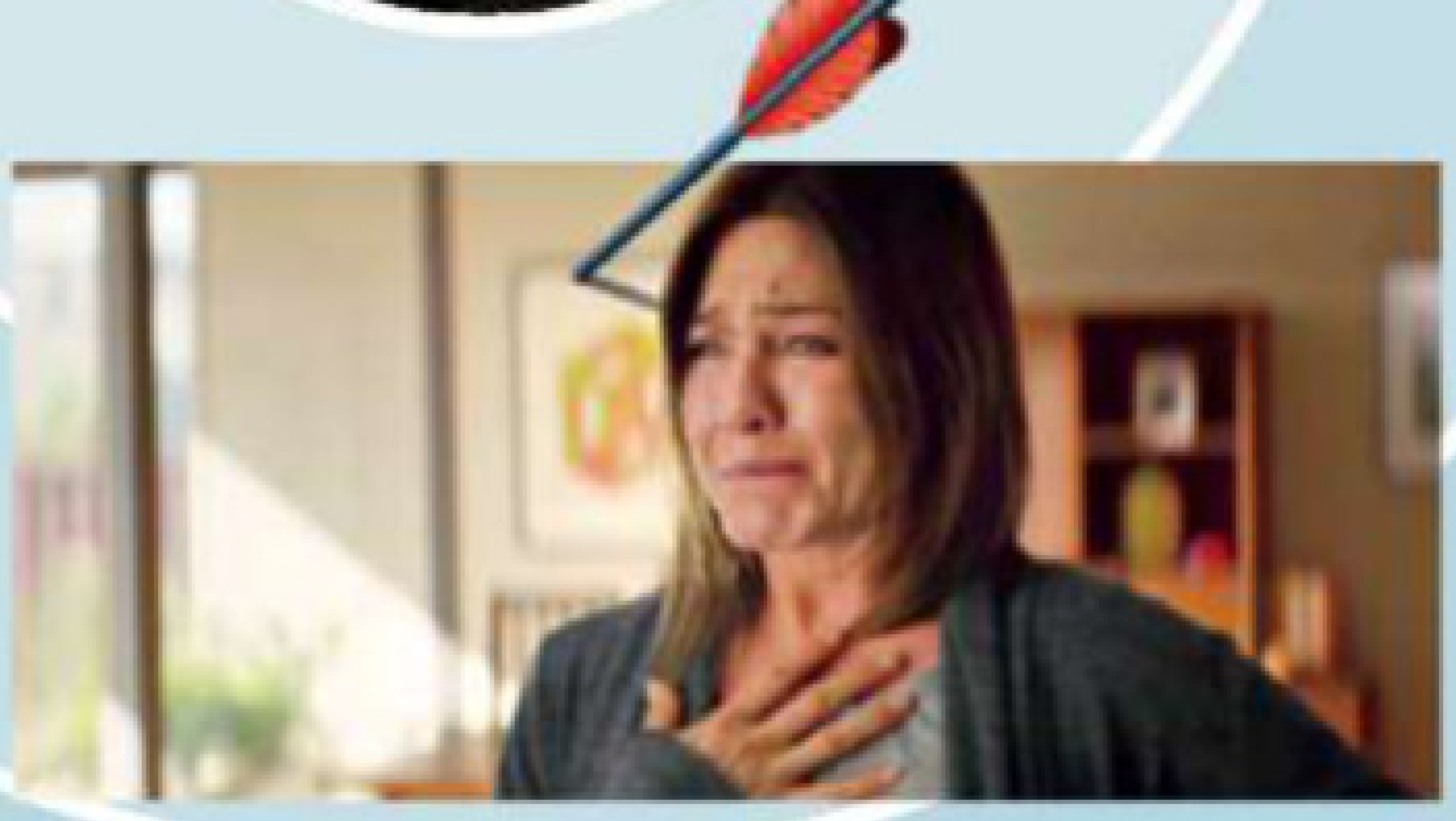
He died the way he lived: shirtless.

The Wreath Witherspoon we deserve (thanks, Mindy)

He is risen! D'Angelo releases first new album in 14 years, the deeply funky *Black Messiah*.

AAAAAAAAAA-HAHAHAHAHA-HAHAHAHAH-HAHAHAHAHAA

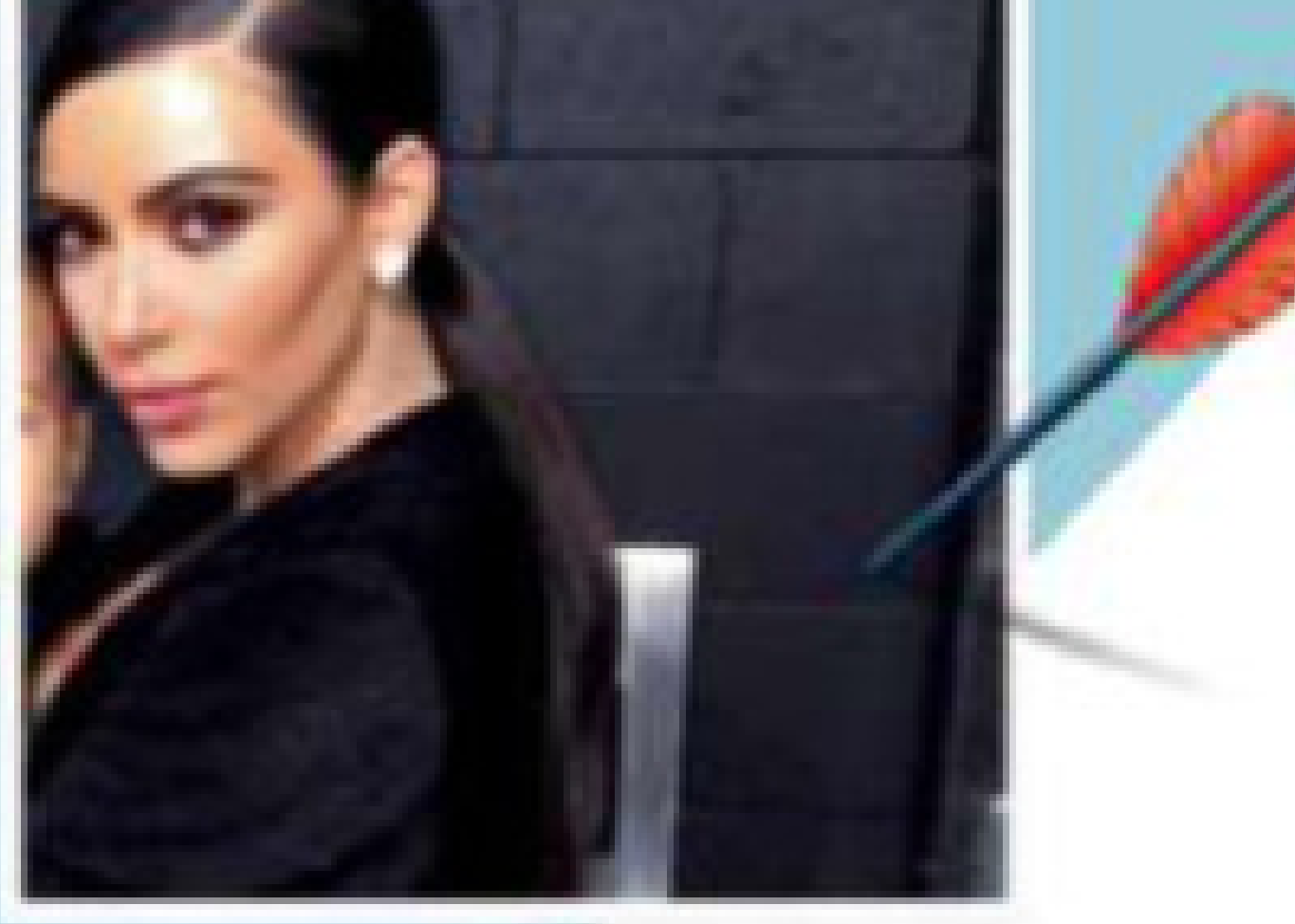
Lesson: When someone shouts "Marco Polo," just hide in the pool and don't answer.



2001: the Soapies with Joey. 2015: the Oscars with Justin?

Barbra holds actual human heart, finally quenches decades-long bloodthirst.

When bad chicken pox happens to good bone structure



Kim Kardashian crops her own child out of selfie. See, she *is* a good mom.

LOGO: SONY; AZALEA: OWEN SWEENEY/INVISION/AP IMAGES; *SELMA*: ATSUSHI NISHIJIMA; *THE MINDY PROJECT*: BETH DUBBER/FOX; *MARCO POLO*: PHIL BRAY/NETFLIX; KARDASHIAN: INSTAGRAM; CHANNING TATUM: ALBERT L. ORTEGA/GETTY IMAGES; *ARROW*: CATE CAMERON/THE CW; *BIG EYES*: LEAH GALLO; *THE NEWSROOM*: MELISSA MOSELEY/HBO; HARRY STYLES: BELLACK/SIPA

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SING
HIS
NAME
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A 4-WEEK COMEDY EXTRAVAGANZA
PREMIERES JAN 4 **SUNDAYS** 8|7c

#Galavant